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A Strategy for the New Nuclear Age

By Peter Beinart

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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AUGUST 3, 1998

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CORRESPONDENCE

When free trade falls

To the editors:

I enjoyed Robert J. Samuelson's defense of free trade in his review of Pat Buchanan's new book ("Trade Free or Die," June 22). However, by concentrating on the win-win consequences for countries and corporations, Samuelson perhaps understates the detrimental impact that increased trade can have on individuals.

I spent several weeks in New Hampshire during the 1996 primaries and found many Buchanan supporters to be working-age Americans who had been laid off when their factories were moved overseas, to places where identical jobs could be filled for much lower wages. No doubt, in the long term, such relocations are good for the economy, but that is of little comfort to newly unemployed workers, who may find themselves without adequate health care, prospects for reemployment, or opportunities for retraining.

Although, in the old social science slogan, correlation does not show causation, it does often shape perception. As long as the effects of increased trade appear merely to be growing profits and expanding inequality, it is hardly surprising that those urging protectionism and isolationism can find an audience. Maybe the time has come to move beyond the "free trade is good" rhetoric to see how the gains from trade can be shared more widely, particularly among those who are losing out in the transition to a globalized market.

PAUL DE SA
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Poetic injustice

To the editors:

Helen Vendler's hostile review of *World Poetry: An Anthology of Verse from Antiquity to Our Time* ("Poetical Correctness," June 15) is so strident that it compels a response. Her objections to the anthology seem grounded in both her dislike of its organization and in a willful misunderstanding of its purpose. (The editor's decision to arrange the contents of this book within a chronological scaffolding did include subcategories by those linguistic territories which Vendler believes the "multiculturally" driven editors disdain.)

Mark van Doren's honorable but obsolescent *World Poetry* was indeed organized by languages, nesting one miniature anthology after another within the larger volume. His solution was considered by us at length, and ultimately rejected, as too passive and, given a number of recent anthologies of Polish, Chinese poetry, etc., simply redundant. We had something else in mind: In drawing on the great translations of Dryden and Marlowe, Mark van Doren did well; in depending on some of the more florid translations of the previous century, he made a compact with necessity. The drive for inclusiveness or the representative can take many forms; van Doren often preferred an inferior translation of a particular poem to an empty niche. To cannibalize his anthology, rather than to draw on the great talent of those twentieth century poets who translate the past with renewed energy, seemed a slack and pointless enterprise.

John S. Major's own introduction is separate, as are the prefaces to each situation, from my own. Vendler chose, in a misleading fashion, to conflate them (and out of context!), the better, no doubt, to drive home her indictment. My co-editor made a careful distinction between the ideological use of the term "multiculturalism" and the dedication to the literature of the world which this book, however imperfectly, tried to represent.

As a close reader and critic, Vendler ought to have distinguished the signatures and statements of one editor from another. Combining them as the joint utterance of "W & M" is unmannerly, deceptive, and, coming from one who condemns them as complicit in the death of the author, careless. The indexing together of translator and poet deliberately mirrors the book's emphasis on the commitment of poets to verse translation. Constraints of space governed this decision as it did many another: it seems obvious enough that the detailed table of contents which Vendler demands would have subsumed another 80 pages in a book where so many poems were forfeited to stay within the limits set by its publisher.

As to the indictment of the editors for "presentism": I thought Vendler too fastidious to coin an "ism," a lexical task usually undertaken by those legions of the politically correct to which she has consigned "W & M." The book's proportions reflect no bias in favor of the present but rather a reliance on the relative availability of translations of modern work; the modernist focus on the past is emphasized throughout.

Vendler distorts the meaning of my sentence about the crossing of borders, while insisting that I had the blinkered intention of using contemporary translations to displace old ones. If she had read the introductions more attentively, she might have better appreciated each editor's principle of selection and the scope of the book's discoveries. Many readers are familiar with the twentieth century poets to whom her review alludes (a symptom of Vendler's presentism?); few are likely to have read the fresh translations from medieval Welsh and Arabic, from the German Baroque, or from the fifteenth century Korean which this book houses—many of the them commissioned for it. The encounter with these poems, whether love lyrics from the Tamil or a parody by A.E. Houseman of the kind of translation of Euripides which marred van Doren's collection more often than facile nostalgia allows us to admit, may persuade them to abide the flaws which so opulent and ambitious a project as *World Poetry* is bound to exhibit.

KATHERINE WASHBURN
Brooklyn, New York

Helen Vendler replies:

I would expect any anthologist, myself included, to defend her choices. There were no errors of fact in my review, and each of the editors of a jointly edited book must assume responsibility for all that is in the book.

Fire fighting

To the editors:

In your editorial of June 22 concerning the India-Pakistan nuclear tests ("The Fire Spreads"), you argue that arms races don't start wars; rather, they are caused by "political and military authorities who are driven by symbols and appetites and ideas and fears." While there is much truth to this, the argument reminds one of another: "Guns don't kill people; people kill people." This, too, contains some truth, but, as I suppose you would agree, it is no argument against gun control. Neither is it sufficient for the world to cultivate, as you seem to suggest, merely a political culture of "deterrence" on the South Asian subcontinent. What is needed is genuine progress toward a "political culture" of nuclear weapons regulation and, ultimately, dismantlement.

ROBERT M. JOHNSTONE
Richmond, Indiana

Barry buddy

To the editors:

How can John B. Judis not see the strong connection between Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan ("Barry's Way," June 22)? Didn't both men share the same

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agenda of minimalist government? If ever two men mirrored each other, it was Goldwater and Reagan.

If there is a significant difference, and there are many, it is that Reagan's politically savvy handlers were followed, while Goldwater's were vetoed. Reagan deliberately appealed to the religious right, while Goldwater, true to his principles, would never bite the hate-bait.

D. Stephen Heersink
San Francisco, California

Real relations

To the editors:

Tamar Jacoby's negative assessment of race relations ("The Next Reconstruction," June 22) is based on anecdotal evidence from Atlanta.

But anecdotes of our Washington, D.C., suburban life in Takoma Park, Maryland, are equally valid. This is an integrated community that has never experienced white flight, where the schools attract extensive involvement from middle-class parents of all races, and where multiracial families—such as ours—are sufficiently typical to be ordinarily comfortable. This is a place where a "black" teacher taught our "blonde" son that he was African American as well as white, a place where the founders of the local tap dancing group are two women—one black, one white—and no one really focuses on that weighty fact in learning the shim-sham. The community is not idyllic or ideal, but it is an example of considerable racial harmony, friendship, and interaction. From where I sit, black estrangement is not getting worse, and neither is white prejudice.

Lena Serge Zezulin
Takoma Park, Maryland

Shooting back

To the editors:

Part reminiscence and part ridicule, Jonathan Cohn's article "Guns 'n' Moses" (June 22) fixated on what "kind of Jew" would support our organization. Cohn neglected to mention that our organization is open not only to Jews but also to non-Jews who are horrified by this century's seven genocides of 56 million people (who were first disarmed by "gun control" laws and then killed by their governments).

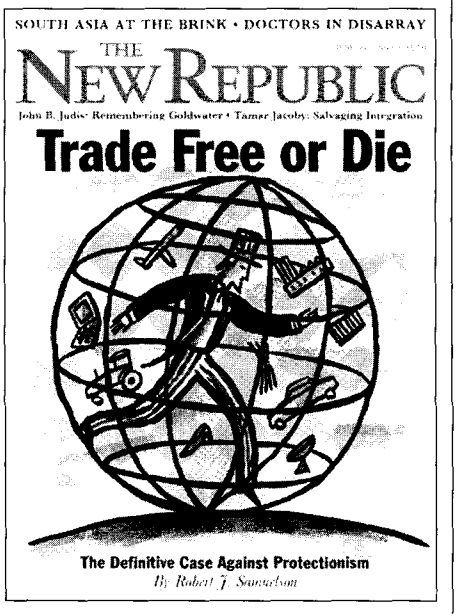
Cohn's survey of our website also omitted our publication showing that American laws derive directly from the pre- and post-Civil War laws designed to disarm black people (slave and free). His article did not mention how our views are rooted in centuries-old Jewish law. Most shameful was Cohn's omission of our organization's national campaign to stimulate Americans to learn about and preserve all of the Bill of Rights for all citizens.

These and other factual omissions in Cohn's article unfairly characterized our organization and its views.

Aaron S. Zelman
Executive Director
Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

To the editors:

Jonathan Cohn seems to doubt that, had Jews in Nazi Germany been armed, they "could have fought off one of the most powerful militaries in world history." Possibly true, but think how much more


SOUTH ASIA AT THE BRINK • DOCTORS IN DISARRAY
THE NEW REPUBLIC
John B. Judis: Remembering Goldwater • Tamar Jacoby: Salvaging Integration
Trade Free or Die
The Definitive Case Against Protectionism
By Robert J. Samuelson

difficult it would have been for Hitler (and easier for the Allies) had those six million been shooting back.

Cohn also faults Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership for citing Israel as a place where guns are part of daily life, while not mentioning that Israel also requires a permit to own a gun. It's true that JPFO opposes permits, but to criticize it for this ignores a political difference between here and there. In Israel, gun ownership and carrying is encouraged, while here current fashion encourages the self-righteous to brag that they've never even touched a gun.

Landon Lockett
Austin, Texas

To the editors:

Jonathan Cohn might be surprised and shocked but also enlightened to read what America's Founders said about firearms. Here's a short sample: "Firearms stand next in importance to the Constitution itself. They are the American people's liberty, teeth and keystone under independence.... When firearms go, all goes. We need them every hour."—George Washington; "Arms in the hands of the citizens may be used at individual discretion for the defense of the country, the overthrow of tyranny or private self-defense."—John Adams; "The strongest reason for the people to retain the right to keep and bear arms is as a last resort to protect themselves against tyranny in government."—Thomas Jefferson.

History proves that what the Founders have indicated is true.

Ronald Cohn
Woodland Hills, California

Cuba's disease

To the editors:

We were pleased to see the article "Silent Treatment" by David Van Sickle (June 22) in reference to the outbreak of dengue as an example of "what ails Cuban health care." Other examples of this ailment include the inability of Cuban citizens to obtain as rudimentary a medication as aspirin, while the tourist finds in Cuba full access to modern medical facilities and the latest medicines.

We admire Dr. Desi Mendoza, who paid for his professional dedication with imprisonment; however, he was not the only one who met this fate. Two independent journalists—Juan Carlos Cespedes (Agencia de Prensa Libre Oriental) and Nicolas Rosario Rosabal (Habana Press)—who reported to the outside world Dr. Mendoza's findings also suffered Castro's jail for their professional dedication to journalism. Since then, both journalists had to emigrate to the United States.

Jose Alberto Hernandez, M.D.
President, CubaNet
Coral Gables, Florida

A question of interest

To the editors:

Jonathan Chait claims ("Dangerous Liaison," June 22) that we may use the budget surplus to pay the national debt and move the repaid bonds into the Social Security fund. He claims we will save the interest we are paying on the national debt. What? If this is true, the treasury must pay no interest on securities issued to the Social Security Administration.

Richard F. Miller
San Francisco, California

Jonathan Chait replies:

No, the federal government would be paying interest to itself. So what?

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FROM WASHINGTON

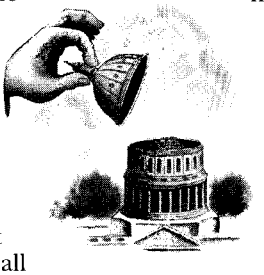
Vietnam syndrome

In March 1965, a young reporter for the Associated Press in South Vietnam began researching a story about the American Army's use of gas against the Communists. The reporter's name was Peter Arnett. He had picked up rumors about the gas from an American civilian aid adviser in Binh Long Province, and, in his travels, he learned that chemical agents were being used in the Third Corps region around Saigon. The breakthrough came when his photographer, a German named Horst Faas, encountered South Vietnamese soldiers equipped with rubber gas masks and gas canisters. As Arnett recalls in his memoir, *Live From the Battlefield*, he was so certain of his story that he decided not to go back for comment from military authorities who had declined to comment earlier. "The United States is experimenting with gas warfare against the Vietcong," the story began. "Both American and Vietnamese forces have used gas against the Communist guerrillas...." Later, the story noted: "Various nonlethal-type gases have been used against the guerrillas in the Second and Third Corps regions of Vietnam." It created an international outcry, and it helped Arnett win a Pulitzer Prize. Not bad for what was essentially a hyped story about a limited U.S.-backed tear gas campaign.

More than three decades later, Arnett is once again embroiled in a controversy over the American military's alleged use of secret gases in Southeast Asia. This time, however, Arnett's accusations have boomeranged. Once CNN and *Time* magazine were forced to admit that their story alleging that American commandos had used sarin gas against U.S. defectors in Laos was not backed up by evidence, Arnett quickly backpedaled. "I'm a company guy," he said. "You want me to read a script, I'll read it."

But why did Arnett believe the script that was put in front of him in the first place? A look at his record in Vietnam, the Gulf war, and Bosnia suggests there may have been more to his credulous acceptance of the sarin story than mere superstar passivity. Though Arnett is not the hardened left-wing ideologue depicted by conservatives such as Arnaud de Borchgrave in *The Wall Street Journal*, he has consistently believed the worst about the U.S. military's conduct—and shown rather less skepticism about America's enemies. Time and again, Arnett's brand of objectivity has resulted in morally warped coverage.

A native New Zealander who moved to Southeast Asia in his twenties, Arnett was motivated by "action" rather than ideology. He became known for tenacity and sheer physical courage—whether he was surviving a beating by South Vietnamese police or racing through the war zone in his Karmann Ghia. Arnett's outsider's doubts about the United States were only confirmed at the daily briefings by the American military known as the "five o'clock follies." But, like others who covered the war, Arnett's efforts to debunk American weasel words blinded him to what the other side was doing. For all his alarums about the use of tear gas in 1965, he basically ignored atrocities by the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong and exaggerated Communist military strength. During the massive 1968 Tet Offensive, in which the Vietcong, to the shock of the United States, invaded Saigon, Arnett reported the sensational news that enemy troops had seized the American Embassy. Arnett's error wasn't so much that he initially made this mistake—the fog of war had descended on soldiers and hacks alike—but that he clung to it even after American officials had shown that the Vietcong had in fact been repulsed.



As Peter Braestrup's classic analysis of the Vietnam press corps, *Big Story*, makes clear, Arnett was the journalist who most consistently oversold the accomplishments of the Vietcong during the Tet Offensive. "The past few days," Arnett wrote, "have shown that the Communist underground is as effective and all-pervading in Saigon as in the most contested hamlets in the countryside." But, as Braestrup pointed out, this was not quite right: "Much of the Vietcong underground (or 'infrastructure') in Saigon, as in other cities, 'surfaced' and was destroyed in the early fighting." And, in focusing on the American destruction of Vietnamese villages, Braestrup concluded, Arnett and other journalists completely missed one big story of the Tet Offensive: the massacre of civilians by the Vietcong in the city of Hue.

In 1972, Arnett accompanied a delegation of anti-war Americans to Hanoi. Arnett spent days being interviewed and vetted by pro-Communist peace activists Cora Weiss and David Dellinger: in his words, "I was desperate to go." So desperate that Arnett agreed to become a member of the official delegation in order to, as he put it, "satisfy North Vietnamese bureaucratic regulations." Arnett concedes that the "event was produced to gain the maximum propaganda" but spends most of his account contrasting the industry and humility of the North Vietnamese population with the corruption of the South. Arnett never lost his solicitude for the North, bragging in his memoirs that, in 1975, "I rode around liberated Saigon in a handsome black sedan with diplomatic plates, the New Zealand flag rippling from the hood"—leaving readers to wonder whether the citizens of Saigon themselves necessarily felt that they had been "liberated" by the imposition of communism.

The same insouciance that Arnett displayed in Hanoi once again surfaced in Baghdad during the Gulf war. As in Vietnam, Arnett's courage in staying on the air as bombs rained down was undeniable. But, just as he had allowed the North Vietnamese to guide him around Hanoi, so he also seemed passive in the face of Iraqi propaganda. His hunt for accounts of civilian deaths played right into the hands of a regime trying to show the Americans as wanton aggressors visiting death upon helpless innocents. The most notorious instance of Arnett's approach, of course, was his portrayal of a "baby-milk factory" flattened by American bombs; according to the Pentagon, the milk factory was in fact a biological weapons plant.

Arnett played a similar role in Bosnia in 1995. As NATO forces tried to bomb Serb forces into backing off Sarajevo, there was Arnett, blandly providing an opportunity for Serb leader Radovan Karadzic to air his (untrue) charges of mass civilian casualties. "They're [the Serbs] saying already that quite a few civilians have been killed and some have been injured," Arnett declared on September 7 of that year. In an interview with Karadzic, Arnett didn't challenge Karadzic's statement that "they are bombarding us so seriously that it hasn't been seen since the second world war in Europe.... This is terrible aggression on a small Serbian nation here."

Through it all, Arnett seemed driven to relive his salad days in Vietnam. Now, with the phony sarin gas story, he truly has.

JACOB HEILBRUNN

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Where We Stand

A commentary on public education and other critical issues

Success Stories

By SANDRA FELDMAN, President
American Federation of Teachers

I wish all the education critics and detractors could have joined me at the commencement ceremony for the 1998 graduates of James Madison High School in Brooklyn, New York.

Madison, which happens to be my alma mater, is a neighborhood urban public school, serving children of working families. My niece Marcy, whose father (my brother) works for the telephone company and is a single parent (widower), was one of the graduates, and knowing I'd be there anyway, the school had asked me to give the commencement address.

The students were intoxicating: smart, responsive, and beautiful, of every shade and hue. Here's a sample of last names from the alphabetical roster of graduates: Antoine, Bacovic, Baker, Calderon, Cannon, Darling, De Los Rios, Fedoreiko, Gao, Gonzales, Ha, Ivanchenko, Jackson, Lau, Lee, Martzsenyuk, Morgan, O'Donnell, Phillips....You get the picture.

New York City Mosaic

This is a completely integrated school, made up of that heady Brooklyn mix—African-Americans, Latinos from several different countries, Haitians and other Caribbean immigrants, newly arrived Russian and other Eastern European immigrants, and "native" Jewish, Italian, and Polish families.

Many of the kids have seen quite a bit of hardship. Pranita Singh, for example, wept as she presented Kauna Tisnovsky the JMHS Medal for Excellence in ESL. It had been named for her father Troy Singh, who had died of leukemia last year and who, she said, had come from poverty to "the top: He was a respected Madison High School teacher."

Medals for excellence in foreign languages were given for accomplishments in Chinese, French, Hebrew, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. The one for mathematics went to a young woman, Xin Zhao, who had earned a score of 100 on every New York State Regents examination. The teacher, Mrs. Hanley, who gave the award for excellence in history to Victoria Sirkenovskaya, thanked her students, "who kept me on my toes with their questions."

The student union president, Shayna Glantz, surprised herself when tears came as she talked of having arrived in this country just three years earlier. She thanked all her teachers by name, to a wildly enthusiastic response from her peers and from the many parents present.

Marcy, I must brag, won the award for performing arts. And because of caring teachers, a loving family, and a low-tuition state university, she will be going off to college this fall, along with 90 percent of her class.

James Madison is a neighborhood school where kids are expected to achieve—and do.

This is New York City, folks. And a neighborhood school (one of many) where real learning goes on because the students are expected to behave and to work hard. A school with great kids....and involved parents.

Despite the obvious hardships, despite the struggle to keep a balance between work and the kids and to pay the bills, the parents were a strong part of that school community. The P.A. president burst into joyous tears as her daughter walked across the stage to collect that diploma, and you could see on her face how much it had taken, how much she had given, to make this moment happen.

A terrific faculty, fairly senior, with enough retirements occurring so that I could see a nice representation of young teachers. And—guess what—fully, strongly unionized! Just like so many other great neighborhood public schools that deserve support for the excellent job they do.

It's Happening All Over

While this wonderful event was taking place at Marcy's school, I thought about how kids all over the country were getting their diplomas—kids from other city schools and from schools in the suburbs and rural areas—who had been taught by teachers belonging to both teacher unions, the AFT and the National Education Association (NEA). Many of the Madison teachers, who gathered around after the ceremonies were over, asked me about the possible merger between the two unions. They hoped it would come to pass so the AFT and the NEA would be able to pull together on issues that matter for kids—like higher standards and orderly schools.

Although NEA delegates did not support the merger, there is no doubt that America's teachers want their unions to work together to help children and to enhance and improve public schools—and we will. The AFT and the NEA have been cooperating on projects to improve learning. And we plan to step up those efforts because America's public schools ensure our country's future, our continued greatness, and our democracy by welcoming every child who enters and guaranteeing that child an education.

But in the meantime, oh, how I wish the people who have doubts about public schools could have been in Brooklyn with me that day. It would have renewed their faith. ▮

Where We Stand **is published once every month in *The New Republic*. To comment, write to Sandra Feldman, AFT, 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20001.** **© Sandra Feldman 1998.** **Visit our web site (http://www.aft.org).**

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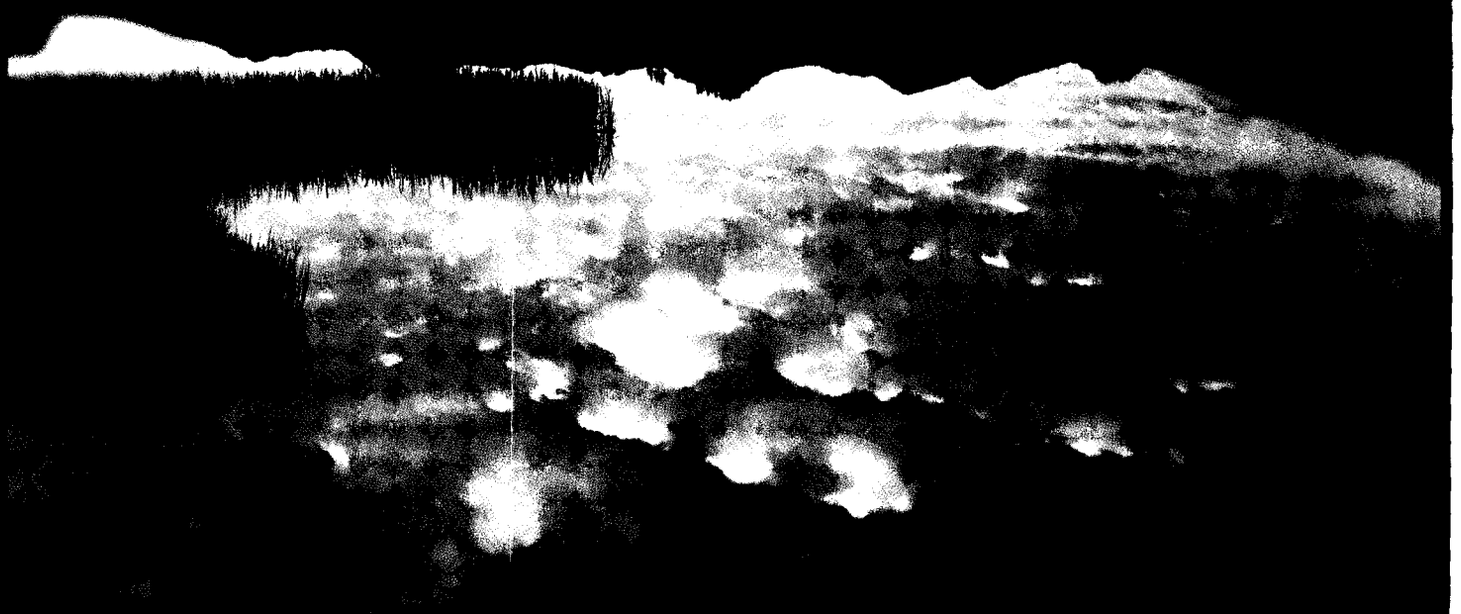
DISPLAYED IN A FRAGILE MUSEUM CALLED EARTH.



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THE NEW REPUBLIC

AUGUST 3, 1998

JAPAN CRASHING

Japan Inc. is crumbling. Last week's electoral defeat of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party, whose members had long served as the country's vaunted CEOs, is only another sign of the system's internal decay. So are its spiraling recession, its sputtering stock market, its failing banks, and its faltering exchange rate. This is not, of course, altogether bad or even unexpected. Even when healthy, Japan Inc. depended on a mix of protectionism and patronage that produced a corrosive nexus between the business of politics and the politics of business. It was offensive to Japan's trading partners, and in the end it was destructive to Japan itself.

The trouble is that the current system's demise may drag on for years, and there is no guarantee that an open and more completely democratic one will replace it. Japan has never truly embraced an American-style competitive marketplace. Nor has it developed a truly open political system; rather, politics has been the province of the corporate and bureaucratic interests that have centrally managed the economy for the last 40 years. The irony is that Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, who tearfully announced his resignation after last week's parliamentary elections, was once seen as the kind of aggressive, independent leader who could put an end to the favoritism and pork-barrel spending that had turned Tokyo into a gaudy Tammany Hall. His failure is just one more reminder of how difficult introducing greater accountability into Japan's economic model will be.

Indeed, in the short term, things may get worse. Without a clear political consensus, the long-overdue stimulus package Hashimoto was about to push through the legislature—a plan to cut taxes and thus stimulate consumption—may be delayed even further. And, without a new economic consensus, there is mounting fear in Washington that Tokyo's ills will not only infect Beijing and Bangkok but Bonn and London and New York as well.

In response, some believe the Clinton administration must finally do what it threatened to do long ago: pressure Japan's ruling party to make radical economic reforms at any cost—even if those pressures mean rupturing our relations in the immediate future. There is a certain allure to this big bang strategy; after all, piecemeal efforts—like the recent deal to prop up the yen—have largely failed in the past.

Yet this all-or-nothing approach does more than overestimate America's influence. It overlooks the fact that America's relationship to Japan is not only economic but also strategic. U.S. trade with Japan comprises less than one percent of our Gross National Product; in contrast, the U.S. military bases on Okinawa remain our most vital installations in Asia since the closing of Subic Bay in the Philippines in 1992. Moreover, pushing Tokyo too hard, too overtly may provoke the very neo-nationalist forces we most want to contain. "America must not be too impatient," warns Akio Mikuni, the head of one of Japan's leading credit-rating agencies and a harsh critic of the current Japanese system.

In fact, there are reasons not to panic. Americans tend to view Japan as a mirror image of themselves, of their own sense of confidence. Thus, in the 1980s, Japan Inc. was invulnerable; now it seems irredeemable. The more likely scenario is that, in the long run, Japan's crisis may unleash the internal forces—the only forces—that can truly bring change. The election last week was not only a rebuke of the old political-economic model (see "Sundown" by Jacob M. Schlesinger, page 12); it was a reflection of a growing democratic impulse, of a correlation between the government's performance and the public's response. After dithering for months over how to deal with the banking crisis, the Liberal Democratic Party may finally feel compelled to act. If not, the country's fledgling Democratic Party may win the landslide victory in the next election and shatter the status quo once and for all.

In the interim, the U.S. must continue to nudge Japan to cut taxes, stimulate consumption—especially of Asia's imports—deregulate banks, and shut down unprofitable businesses that have been propped up by bad loans. But, ultimately, America must do the one thing that is indisputably in its control: steer clear of the same protectionist policies that are now costing Japan Inc. so dearly. The protectionist impulse is never easy to resist, and it may become even harder in the short term. As Japan tries to climb out of its recession, it may, as it has in the past, prop up its ailing economy with exports, further exacerbating its current trade surplus with the United States. By 2000, Pat Buchanan and his peasants with pitchforks may be sweeping the countryside again. What a tragedy it would be if the U.S. became more like Japan Inc. just as the old order is dying. •

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NOTEBOOK

COLORIZING HISTORY: In the July 20 issue of *The New Yorker*, Douglas Brinkley, a competent and extremely enterprising young historian and biographer, reports that color footage of the D-Day landing, shot by no less a film personage than John Ford, has recently come to light. "[T]he soldiers who fought on the beaches and battlefields of Europe lived and died amid vivid colors," Brinkley explains, "blue skies and emerald cropland, billowing purple smoke and bright-red blood." Did anybody think that they lived and died in black and white? No, the point about D-Day's production values is that now *we* will be able to see it in living (and dying) color. It's an interesting prospect, but one wonders why *The New Yorker* devotes three pages to the tale of how Ford's movies got lost, discovered, lost again, and, finally, rediscovered once and for all. The puzzlement disappears in Brinkley's penultimate paragraph. It seems that the veteran who found the footage (Melvyn R. Paisley, an assistant secretary of the Navy under Ronald Reagan) is "now in the process of donating a copy of the film to the Eisenhower Center at the University of New Orleans, of which I am the director. The center, which is the home of the largest oral history of Second World War veterans, is now working with the director Steven Spielberg and others to preserve the color film. (Spielberg's own Second World War epic, 'Saving Private Ryan,' is set for release this month.)" Get it? The color footage of the real war is significant for its link to the color footage of the fake war. This is the Spielbergian spirit: Disguise your inauthenticity with a loud commitment to authenticity. And here is synergy in spades. Until now, historians have had to make do with an occasional Hollywood option, but now the sky's the limit. Why aspire to a Bancroft Prize when you can aspire to an Oscar?

DIAL 666-FILM: OK, so the movie may be a little on the morbid side, but is *Titanic* satanic? The Family Research Council seems to think so. The Christian fundamentalist group, run by Gary Bauer, has posted on its website an article, by one Patrick Henry Reardon of *Touchstone* magazine, which claims the movie is "a statement of rebellion against God." The source of Reardon's outrage? Heroine Rose's line that the Leonardo DiCaprio character Jack Dawson "saved me in every way that a human being can be saved." "Anything that says that a human being is saved by purely human means is satanic," explains Reardon. "I believe [Rose's words] also to have been the interpretive, defining line of the film: the assertion that the sort of saving that Jack did was, ultimately, the only kind of saving possible. If that was the thesis statement of the film, then I start looking for the cloven hoof and sniffing for brimstone." Executives at Paramount and 20th Century Fox, which coproduced the hugely profitable movie, don't seem particularly perturbed, but we couldn't help but notice that their competitors over at DreamWorks SKG (sorry, we've got Spielberg on the brain this week) are already taking precautions to make sure they don't offend religious sensibilities in their upcoming movie, *The Prince of Egypt*. The studio has consulted a who's who of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim leaders to ensure that the animated feature, which focuses on the life of Moses and the Jewish exodus from Egypt, is as inoffensive as possible. Among the studio's advisers are such Christian-right luminaries as Ralph Reed, James Dobson, and Jerry Falwell, who told *The Washington Times* he'd helped the film's producers catch "glaring mistakes." Incredibly, everyone seems to be happy with the results—even Ibrahim Hooper, director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, who, the *Times* reported, "said he did not detect any strong political overtones in the movie as to whom God gave the Promised Land [to], the Jews or Arabs [sic]." (Maybe that's because the movie ends abruptly with Moses leading the Jews through the parted waters of the Red Sea.) In fact, things have gone so well that Falwell says he's suggested DreamWorks add two more movies to make a trilogy: one about King David and one about Jesus. Great idea. But does this mean DreamWorks has to give Falwell executive producer credit?

MULTIPLE CULT OF PERSONALITY DISORDER: Nominations are in for the 680 parliamentary seats at stake in the upcoming elections in North Korea, and here's a list of the candidates: Kim Jong Il. That's right, according to the official North Korean news agency, each one of the 680 constituencies in the country has nominated the Dear Leader, and only the Dear Leader, to run for its seat. "His nomination mirrors the unquestioned will and desire of all the voters," the agency reported. This result is a tribute not only to the flexibility of North Korean democracy (clearly, Kim Jong Il got a waiver of the normal district residency requirements) but also to its efficiency (it's hard to imagine this particular legislature getting bogged down in a filibuster). And of course one issue that will be at the top of the new parliament's agenda is the matter of building nuclear weapons. Supposedly, North Korea has frozen its bomb-making program under the terms of a 1994 agreement with the United States. But there is disturbing new evidence that the North has nevertheless been hiding its weapons-grade material from international inspectors, according to a July 10 General Accounting Office study (which for some reason *The New York Times* didn't get around to reporting until July 14). The GAO reports that North Korea has refused to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency to put monitoring devices on nuclear waste tanks—perhaps because the North Koreans have tampered with those tanks since the 1994 deal. Another reason to question North Korea's intentions is the government's recent resumption of maintenance work on a nuclear reactor that it had shut down in accordance with the agreement. Of course, the story behind that fact is an interesting para-

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ble all its own. The North complains that it's not getting the fuel oil that the U.S. was supposed to supply, pending the completion of two other nuclear power plants, and it's true the oil supply has in fact dried up. One reason is that Japan and South Korea, who were supposed to underwrite the purchases of fuel and the construction of the plants, are in financial distress—and the Clinton administration sold the deal to Congress on the condition that U.S. taxpayers wouldn't have to foot the bill. But this isn't entirely a problem of money. Taiwan, one of the few Asian countries well-managed enough to have steered clear of the region's recession, has recently stepped forward and offered to pay. The United States turned the offer down—it seems that China, which President Clinton has lately been hailing as a force for stability in Korea, objected. (This was of a piece with the administration's general snubbing of Taiwan, which was illustrated most dramatically by the president's announcement during his visit to China that America now shares China's categorical rejection of Taiwan's independence or membership in international organizations.) All of this has been clarifying about U.S. policy toward North Korea. No longer can the Clinton administration claim with any credibility that the top priority of that policy is to denuclearize North Korea by all reasonable means necessary. Rather, the policy is one of denuclearizing North Korea by all reasonable means that don't unduly offend China's government. Of course, the one thing that would render the dangerous situation in Northeast Asia much less dangerous is the very thing that would most offend the rulers of both China and North Korea: the advent of genuine democracy in either place. But somehow we don't think the North Korean parliament is going to be taking *that* issue up in its next session.

FIRM POLICIES: Paine Webber wants to be quite clear: It did not fire Ed Blum. But, even so, the brokerage firm didn't deny the rationale behind his resignation last week: "He was asked to refrain from publishing articles with a point of view that reflected negatively on the firm's reputation and led to client complaints and a loss of business," the firm said in a statement. It seems that Blum's outspoken and public criticism of Houston's affirmative action policies had undermined consumers' perception that the company was committed to diversity. And Paine Webber wasn't going to allow that. What's more, the company's action was perfectly legal. Like other employers, Paine Webber maintains the right to limit what employees say, both in their capacities as employees and as private individuals. Merely mentioning your employer to the press, even as an aside, can trigger swift and utterly legal reprisal. Now, the corporate impulse to maintain a good image is understandable, but we would have thought that free speech is a little more important. It's up to companies to show a little self-restraint when it comes to allowing employee expression on legitimate matters of public concern. Certainly Paine Weber should have.

TERMINAL TROUBLE:

Computer Problems Persist at New Airport In Kuala Lumpur

—*The Asian Wall Street Journal*, July 3.

New Malaysia Airport Works Out the Bugs

—*The International Herald Tribune*, same day.

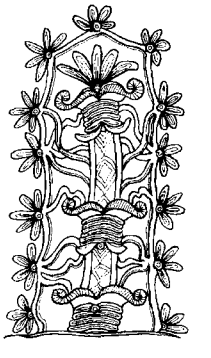
(Thanks to Brett King, Hong Kong.)

THE HARD QUESTIONS

BACK TO NATURE

By Jean Bethke Elshtain

When I was in graduate school in the not-so-distant past, it was commonplace to speak about theories of human nature. For the most part, this is what political philosophy was supposed to be about—defining human nature and then conjuring up political systems to accommodate it or permit it to flourish. For example, Thomas Hobbes came up with an absolute monarch who would rule over inherently power-mad human beings, lest life in the state of nature remain "nasty, brutish, and short." John Locke proposed constitutional government—that is, government by consent of the governed—as a way for a more benign breed of human beings to rule themselves and establish basic liberties. And so on.



But, today, talk of "human nature" has fallen by the wayside. This isn't just a matter of shifting academic fashions but of a fundamental challenge to the concept that human nature even matters in the first place. According to an increasing chorus of contemporary scholars, talk about innate human capacities, limits, needs, tendencies, and traits is irrelevant and thus illegitimate. In this line of thinking, such "essentialist" concepts fail to take account of determining factors like the cultural environment or social mores—and thus it is better to think in "constructivist" terms. In other words, we should all understand that human traits are more or less malleable and plastic, depending on (among other things) one's cultural environment. Of course, if such constructivism "goes all the way down," as some claim, it invites terminal moral relativism. There are no good people or bad people, no good deeds or bad deeds, but rather a set

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of social actors who are good or bad (and do good or bad) by their own culture's standards, with the understanding that one cannot "judge" those standards.

For reasons I have never quite understood, essentialism got to seem reactionary or conservative, constructivism liberal or radical. And the debate has played out over an array of familiar issues—welfare dependency, teen pregnancy, crime—with the strong essentialists passing moral judgments, citing the need to make universal moral claims, and the equally vehement constructivists refusing to make such judgments, citing the helplessness of individuals in the face of their cultural upbringing. But neither approach seems entirely satisfactory today. The problem with constructivism is that it removes one's ability to take any strong political stands whatsoever. Why, for example, should I care about assaults on people's dignity or welfare if there is nothing fundamental about the human person itself that can be damaged? Indeed, how can I even come to recognize something as an affront unless I am working with a set of assumptions concerning in what the dignity of human beings consists? Pure essentialism, on the other hand, seems equally unsatisfactory. All that talk about human nature assumed there was something absolutely rock-solid that unfolded inexorably over the course of a life—as if factors like family life, education, and political conditions had no impact on shaping one's being.

Luckily, there is an alternative that avoids either extreme. Rather than beginning with a fully fleshed-out theory of human nature, as philosophers used to do, you start by considering certain anthropological presuppositions. For example, we know that children incur an assault to their very humanness if they suffer from neglect and nonattachment. Just think of those children abandoned in Romanian orphanages and adopted by compassionate American families who held to the optimistic belief that a changed environment would undo all the previous damage. It didn't. This tells us that every human being, in every culture, needs attachments of a specific kind—concrete, particular, and continuing. Otherwise, we would not suffer distortion and damage if such relations were absent. The knowledge we now have of what happens to children in the absence of strong, early, loving attachments to specific adults allows us to assert incontrovertibly that we are dealing with certain givens of human existence. We *know* that things are not going to turn out right if a child is neglected, abandoned, abused, and unloved.

These are not just "academic" arguments. They figure in political life each and every day. One reason we respond to images of starvation, or ethnic cleansing, or bombed villages, or unemployed persons in a bread line—no matter where we see them—is that we surmise, rightly, that a terrible wrong is occurring, that a fundamental feature of human dignity is being wantonly assaulted. One way or another we cannot get around the question of what makes us human. Those who opt for a pre-packaged human nature and those who embrace a wholly contingent silly-putty image of human beings make life much too easy for themselves. The real challenge lies in sorting out whether we are dealing with certain rock-bottom fundamentals without which no genuinely *human* life is possible or, rather, with clusters of qualities and traits that the French find desirable, say, but the Samoans find wholly inexplicable and unnecessary. At this point, labels like "essentialist" just confuse the issue and give evidence of intellectual laziness more than anything else. •

The good news from Tokyo.

SUNDOWN

By Jacob M. Schlesinger

So Ryutaro Hashimoto won't be coming to Washington after all. In the minds of Japan's beleaguered establishment, his scheduled July 22 visit was to have been a symbolic restoration of the global stature lost by the country's tarnished political leaders over the past decade. "The highest honor," Japan's embassy in Washington called it. Hashimoto's was going to be the first "official visit" by a Japanese prime minister since Yasuhiro Nakasone came in 1987, complete with 19-gun salute, welcoming ceremony on the White House South Lawn, and glitzy state dinner.

The hiatus hasn't been an intentional slap by Washington but a reflection of Japan's rotting political system. Since Nakasone's five-year term at the top ended shortly after his meeting with President Reagan, no Japanese premier has been able to cling to the job long enough to earn such an honor. Seven men held the job from 1987 to 1995, each dragged down by scandal, infighting, or incompetence. Hashimoto, who took office in January 1996, recently set the 1990s' record for endurance by passing the two-and-a-half year mark in office. Alas, Hashimoto could not escape this dismal pattern. After his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was trounced at the polls on July 12, Hashimoto was forced to resign and cancel his flight to Washington. His term wasn't a turning point after all—just another spin of the revolving door that passes for Japanese leadership these days.

Still, if Hashimoto's reign has proved disappointing, his demise should provide some hope—for Japan, for the United States, and for relations between the two. It is the most encouraging sign to emerge in five years that Japan is shedding its dysfunctional one-party democracy, the root cause of Japan's domestic troubles and its tensions with even its closest allies.

Except for a brief interruption in the early 1990s, Hashimoto's LDP has controlled the Japanese gov-

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ernment since 1955—the longest winning streak for a political party in a modern developed democracy. Washington fostered, directly and indirectly, this dynasty. Among other things, the U.S. helped establish the conditions for a one-party state by removing the divisive questions of foreign policy from Japanese politics, taking over Japan's security needs and easing the country into a kind of isolationism. The U.S. also aided Japan on its politically soothing path to rapid growth, keeping world markets open to Japanese exports while allowing Tokyo to keep its own markets closed.

The arrangement worked nicely for some time for both sides of the Pacific. The U.S. got a stable, loyal ally against communism in Asia and a model of capitalist success to hold up to uncertain neighbors in the region. The Japanese people got peace and prosperity. And the LDP got to take credit for it.

But, in the LDP, the U.S. had also helped create a monster. During its unchallenged rule, Japan's uncompetitive democracy became corrupt, paralyzed, bureaucratic, beholden to an impossibly broad coalition of special interests, and unable to change course. The rapid rise and fall of prime ministers both reflected and perpetrated the country's lack of clear leadership.

That didn't matter so much when Tokyo was a bit player in world affairs. But, by the 1980s, Japan's economy had outgrown all others except the U.S., and its decisions reverberated around the globe. Japan was, more and more, called upon to drop its accustomed free-rider role and actively support bigger causes, ranging from the multinational alliance to oust Saddam Hussein from Kuwait to the Uruguay Round free-trade agreement. Japan's leaders were unable to rise above parochial domestic interests, except slowly, grudgingly, and under extreme pressure from abroad.

At times, the hectoring from the U.S. took on a strident tone. And, in hindsight, many of the assertions by the once-influential school of Japan-bashers look clearly ridiculous—their worst mistake was to believe that Tokyo's intransigence flowed from strength, not weakness, and was, in essence, part of a clever scheme for dominance inconveniently interrupted by World War II. Even if some Japanese leaders harbored those ambitions, the country's recent stumbling shows how spurious it was for Americans to fear them.

But these so-called Japan revisionists also made a couple of good points, which Japan's current economic crisis has validated. One prescient argument was that Tokyo's ineffectual politics was becoming a burden on the rest of the world. More than eight years since the asset bubble burst, the Japanese government has yet to formulate a convincing policy to clean up the country's banking mess or to pull the economy out of recession. That now drags down Asia's struggling economies and periodically jostles America's stock market, threatening the U.S. boom.

Tokyo's harshest critics were also right to argue that Japan's distorted economic policies and its security affairs could not be treated separately. Japan's supporters among the American diplomatic corps long tried to get the U.S. to soft-pedal its trade complaints, fearing they would undermine Japan's willingness to back the U.S. on diplomatic affairs. But the biggest impact Japan has these days on Asia's political stability is through its economy. The best thing Tokyo could do for the region would be to revive its own growth, open its markets to Asian imports, and make its banks healthy enough to resume lending to its neighbors. That's why even Madeleine Albright, on a recent trip through Tokyo, pressed her Japanese counterpart for looser fiscal policy.

Yet, despite America's mounting frustration with Japan, there have been clear limits on what could be done. Japan is, after all, an independent, sovereign nation. And, for all its economic woes, it remains the world's largest creditor, not a debtor, making it impervious to reform demands from the International Monetary Fund. The one real stick the U.S. has—closing its markets to Japanese goods—would be self-defeating.

In the end, the only way to force change in Japanese policy is to change its political system—to prod the LDP into faster action or to replace it. So the de facto American strategy over the past decade has been to become a stalking horse for a real political opposition in Japan: openly challenging the LDP's policies, articulating better than any Japanese politician an alternative platform of open markets, deregulation, and, now, tax cuts. The Bush administration launched the approach and won some notable successes during the broad-ranging Structural Impediments Initiative talks in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. Public opinion polls at the time showed that the Japanese people sided with U.S. trade negotiators over their own government. One result was an easing of restrictions on large retail stores that triggered a consumer revolution.

Though the U.S. approach has at times been heavy-handed, there has been surprisingly little nationalistic backlash against such unusual intrusion into a country's domestic politics. Indeed, slowly the LDP's dominance has been eroding. The party's defeat in the July 12 upper-house elections was its third major setback in its weakest decade in office. In 1989, the LDP suffered a similar loss in upper-house elections. In 1993, a group of politicians defected from the party—articulating a reform agenda that could have been written in Washington—and succeeded in creating a short-lived anti-LDP coalition government.

Change, however, has been too slow for the frustrated Americans. Even with the LDP's latest setback, major reforms are likely still far off. Because the LDP still controls the more powerful lower house of parliament, Hashimoto's successor will come from within the party—and, given the lackluster crop of leading candidates, will likely be even less forceful than he. The opposition remains fragmented and unlikely to take power soon. As the fallout from the election spreads, there will be dire predictions—echoed by LDP leaders—that the party's setback will actually aggravate Japan's problems by creating a political vacuum and making it hard to formulate a response.

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But that's hard to believe. For years, the LDP has been able to cling to power by arguing that no other party had the experience or skill to run the country. The party's gross mismanagement of the economy in the 1990s—and, by extension, its diplomacy—have shown otherwise. There may be no clear better alternative available, but it's difficult to imagine much worse. That's the message delivered by the Japanese people on July 12.

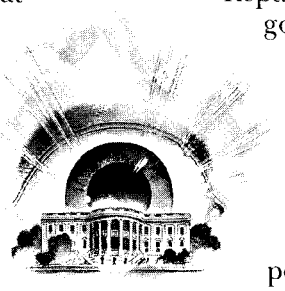
JACOB M. SCHLESINGER, a reporter for *The Wall Street Journal*, is the author of *Shadow Shoguns: The Rise and Fall of Japan's Postwar Political Machine* (Simon & Schuster).

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

GETTING BUSY

By Dana Milbank

Whatever you may think of the Clinton White House, you've got to admire the cadre of young idealists who just keep going merrily about their business as if nothing's amiss. Day after 15-hour day, hundreds of them in the West Wing and Old Executive Office Building busily churn out proposals that will never see the light of day. Surely they know their work will, sooner or later, be swatted down by a Republican Congress bent more on investigation than legislation. But ask them about the frustration, and they'll say, "I'm really not affected by the scandal," or "nothing has changed here," or "business as usual for me." The whole attitude is reminiscent of that Monty Python skit with the unflappable British military officer in his tent in Africa who, told by his doctor that his leg has been bitten off by a tiger, persists cheerfully in the belief he has suffered an insect bite and will grow a new limb.



The business-as-usual line struck me, at first, as a ludicrous attempt at spin. More recently, I've come to the conclusion that, outside the counsel's office and the small circle of scandal managers, nothing *has* changed. The president's staff goes on drafting, hashing, arguing, negotiating, and promoting—an effort as vigorous as it is fruitless. Except that there's a method to this seemingly pointless mania. If the administration can convince the people that it's full of spunk and ideas and that Congress is to blame for inaction, the Democrats might just be able to retake the House—giving the White House staff another chance at enacting a substantial agenda.

To see how this blur of activity works, consider two of the hot issues of the moment: tax cuts and tobacco. The Republicans have just killed the administration's anti-tobacco efforts, burying it alongside campaign finance reform, fast track, child care, and virtually everything on the president's State of the Union wish list. Now Republicans are angling to pass a tax cut they can take home to their base of conservative voters for November's elections. The president, stripped of his own agenda, must now stop the Republicans from implementing theirs. That is, the White House must kill the Republicans' tax cut without appearing to oppose tax cuts. It will also try to use tax cuts to force tobacco back on the agenda. Both sides will have to spin their wheels furiously to make sure nothing happens. Rarely have so many worked so hard to accomplish so little.

The administration plan involves accusing Republicans of being against tax relief—which the Democrats can do somewhat credibly thanks to a most unlikely ally, Phil Gramm of Texas. Recall that the pugnacious Republican senator inserted a $46 billion marriage-penalty tax cut into Senator John McCain's tobacco legislation. It was supposed to be a poison, but the Democrats went along with it. That forced Trent Lott to use other means to kill the bill—and it made the GOP vulnerable to the Democratic charge that they killed the largest tax cut offered in 1998 (never mind that the whole thing was paid for with a cigarette-tax increase). "Now they, the party of tax cuts, have only two months left to deal with the fact that they drove a stake through the heart of a cut in the marriage-tax penalty," Larry Stein, the administration's congressional lobbyist, says with some glee. If Republicans want a tax cut, Stein says, "the only sure way to pass it and get a signature on it is with a tobacco-tax increase."

It's true the budget blueprint passed by the Senate has a tax cut, but it's a relatively modest one—some $30 billion over five years, with no big spending cuts—and the White House figures such a small cut won't do Republicans much good. "Do they really want to go home having killed a large tax cut and passed a smaller one?" Stein asks playfully. Nor would such a modest plan satisfy House Republicans, who passed a budget blueprint that would cut taxes by $101 billion over five years. That plan relies on cuts in discretionary spending, and Democrats would paint it as a callous assault on poverty programs. And, if the Republicans pass a tax-cut bill that even nibbles at the budget surplus (which Clinton has ordered off-limits until Social Security is reformed), the president would veto the bill, his aides say, and hammer Republicans on Social Security.

That leaves the Republicans with little choice but to pass this year's appropriations bills based on last year's balanced budget agreement or risk blame for another shutdown. If all goes according to White House plans, there will be no new tax cuts this year—unless Republicans surrender on tobacco—and that means the Republicans lose their most potent election-year issue.

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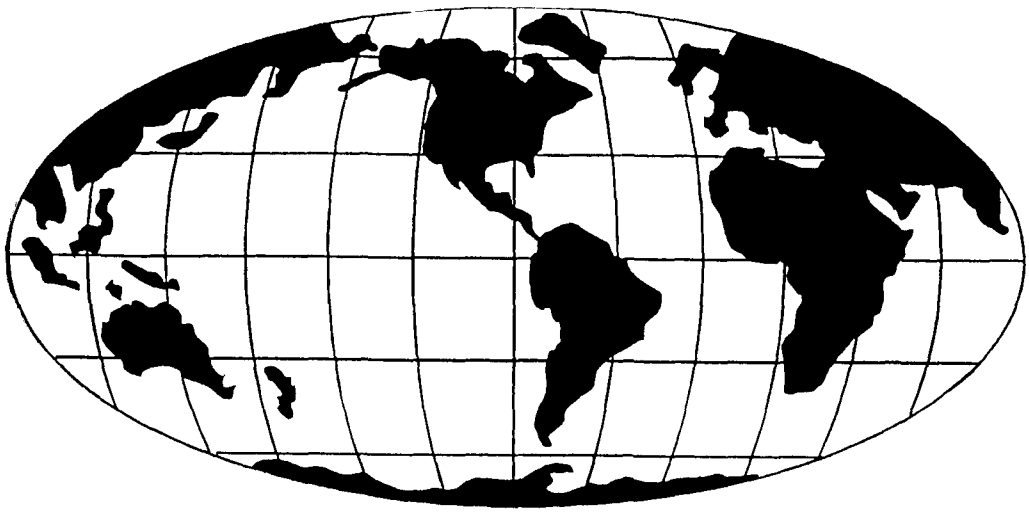

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"I think they're in a box," says Stein.

Which, of course, was precisely the idea all along. Stein took the job in January with a mandate to improve the White House's strained relationship with House Democrats, even if that meant less cooperation with Republicans. The groundwork was laid last winter, when Deputy Chief of Staff John Podesta—who is well liked by Democrats on the Hill but is unpopular with Republicans—encouraged Stein's appointment as top lobbyist for the administration. Stein's immediate predecessor, John Hilley, had infuriated Democrats in 1997 with his negotiation of the balanced budget deal with Republicans. Although Republicans liked Hilley, House Democrats had said they caught him making deals with the GOP behind their backs. And that kind of thing just wouldn't do for 1998. As a top White House aide puts it, "We needed to go into this election cycle with a strong sense we're together."

After taking over just as Bimbroglio was bursting onto the scene, Stein has tried hard to patch up relationships with House Democrats by giving them more face time and a more respectful audience. (Although the newfound coziness with House Democrats certainly adds an extra level of insurance against the threat of impeachment, the timing of Stein's appointment suggests the strategy was in place well before Monica Lewinsky appeared on the scene.) "He has made a sincere effort to win people over and to try to correct some of the past problems," says Steve Elmendorf, chief of staff to Dick Gephardt. Or, as one Democratic leadership aide puts it: "It's hard to go anywhere but up" after Hilley.

Of course, this year's rapprochement with Hill Democrats has contributed to the White House's inability to get its ideas enacted. That's a sacrifice most in the administration are willing to make in exchange for a shot at retaking the House; some in the White House even hope the president's HMO bill of rights won't pass, preferring to use it as an election issue. Republicans, for their part, haven't shown much aptitude or interest in legislating this year, hoping to coast into November's elections. But that's a dangerous strategy to use against an administration that is working so fervently to appear busy. The president may not be getting much through Congress, but he won't have much trouble convincing voters the White House is a 'round-the-clock policy machine.

At a recent press briefing, *The Washington Post*'s John Harris made the mistake of asking Mike McCurry what would become of Clinton's domestic agenda after the tobacco bill's failure. McCurry, who anticipated the question, pulled out a list and rambled on at mind-numbing length about education opportunity zones, Ryan White AIDS funding, and too many others. "Sorry I asked," Harris muttered. But McCurry wouldn't stop. "You wanted to know what is the domestic agenda we're pursuing, and this is it; and you're going to get it in detail," he said. After the press secretary rambled on still more, Harris replied, "Could you repeat that? My pen ran out." •

ST. LOUIS DISPATCH

BUS BATTLE

By Erika Niedowski

Last May, when Charles Mischeaux learned that his old ally and one of the Democrats' best U.S. Senate challengers—Jeremiah "Jay" Nixon—was speaking in St. Louis, he interrupted his vacation in Illinois and drove more than two hours to be there. At the party dinner, waiters served Caesar salads, roast beef, and, later, just before Nixon delivered a stump speech that would bring the crowd to its feet, strawberry cheesecake for dessert. But Mischeaux didn't eat a bite. In fact, the 62-year-old president of the St. Louis NAACP didn't go inside at all. Instead, he and about 15 other black Democrats stood outside with a batch of big white picket signs saying: "No Way Jay" and "What Happened to Integrity?"

What happened is that Nixon—the presumptive challenger to GOP Senator Christopher "Kit" Bond in the fall—has split state Democrats over an unlikely issue: busing. After moving to end a court-ordered school desegregation program that affects an estimated 13,000 children in this city along the Mississippi River, Nixon, a white man who is the state's attorney general, has angered many African Americans so much that they are not just declining to endorse him; they are actively working to end his political career. "I am backing Bond," says Mischeaux. "And I'm a Democrat."

Busing, of course, isn't supposed to be a polarizing issue in 1998. It's supposed to be a relic of the 1970s—the stuff of PBS documentaries and cranky radio talk-show hosts a decade past their prime. But what's happening in St. Louis is happening elsewhere, too. More than 20 years after Boston's famous busing wars, politicians in that city are again grappling with the question of integrating public schools: last January, Gareth Saunders, who is black, and three other Boston city councilors opposed the reelection of conservative council President James M. Kelly because they wanted a more "progressive" leader to handle contentious issues like busing and public housing. In Maryland last month, the embattled Democratic governor, Parris Glendening, lost the endorsement of Prince George's County Executive Wayne Curry, an African American, in part because of a dispute over education funding at a time when court-ordered busing is coming to an end in the majority-black county. "It's still political dynamite," explains Peter Roff, political director for GOPAC, the Republican political action committee. "Passion motivates turnout, and people feel

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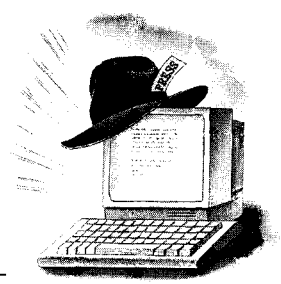
passionate about where their kids go to school."

Nowhere, though, has busing redefined the political dynamic as it has in Missouri, where more than 20 percent of Democrats are black, and where Democratic candidates can usually count on winning at least 80 percent of the black vote. When Nixon offered to settle the 26-year-old case with $304 million for new schools and the renovation of existing ones, Missouri Representative William L. Clay, a black Democrat who represents a majority-black St. Louis district, wrote a letter to President Clinton asking him to cancel an appearance at an upcoming Nixon fund-raiser. In it, Clay wrote, "I am sure that if Orval Faubus [the former Arkansas governor who ordered the National Guard to prevent the integration of Little Rock's Central High School in 1957] in the past had sought your support for a Senate campaign you would not give it. You should not give it to Jay Nixon today." "I don't want Mr. Nixon to represent me in the United States Senate," the congressman told me at the time. "And I'll do what I have to do." The *St. Louis American*, a black-oriented weekly, also railed against Nixon for, in no particular order, his "negative racial politics," his "outrageous public conduct," and his "totally specious and inadequate ... settlement offer."

A few months later, James DeClue, who chairs the education committee of the St. Louis NAACP and has worked on the city's desegregation case since 1976, helped found the "African Americans for Bond" committee, which collected $50,000 in contributions and pledges at its inaugural fund-raiser—attended by Bond—in May. "We aren't really voting for Kit Bond as much as we are voting against Jay Nixon, and [Bond] understands that," says the 74-year-old former high school teacher. "But a vote is a vote, and a dollar is a dollar." That's certainly good enough for Bond. Although the NAACP recently gave the two-term senator an "F" for his voting record, he's been touting his civil rights credentials—namely, the fact that, while he was Missouri's governor in the early '80s, he appointed the state's first black Cabinet member and helped restore cuts in federal funding for public housing programs.



Nixon, meanwhile, has used the issue to appeal to many "outstate" residents who resent the money being spent on the busing program in St. Louis—more than $1 billion to date—and would rather see their taxpayer dollars at work closer to home. Of course, he's simultaneously making an effort at repairing the breach with minority groups. Most notably, in May, he hired Reuben Shelton, the first black president of the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis, making him the highest-ranking black ever to work in the attorney general's office. Soon after that, one of Nixon's black supporters, Public Service Commissioner Harold Crumpton, sent an enthusiastic letter to about 400 prominent African Americans urging them to back the Democrat in his Senate bid.

National Democratic operatives have pitched in, too. Earlier this year, strategists at the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee waged a public relations offensive targeting Bond's media consultant, Alex Castellanos, mastermind of the infamous "hands" ad that GOP Senator Jesse Helms aired during his 1990 reelection bid against black Democrat Harvey Gantt. The controversial spot attacked racial hiring quotas by showing a pair of white hands crumpling a rejection letter; the man had lost the job, a voice explained, to a less-qualified minority. Castellanos, the campaign committee charged, was a "race-baiter."

For a while last November, a truce between the attorney general and his critics seemed in the offing. Days before Mischeaux's NAACP was scheduled to picket a Nixon fund-raiser, the attorney general met with officials from that group and cut a deal: If he withdrew his plan to end the state's payments for the busing program, the picket would be called off. On the night of the $1,000-a-plate event at St. Louis' Fox Theatre, President Clinton himself—just in from Wichita, Kansas—made a personal appeal to about a dozen African American activists, most of them ministers, who had gathered in a private room. One participant, *St. Louis American* publisher Donald Suggs, recalls the president saying that, as Arkansas's former attorney general, he himself had dealt with the complicated issue of desegregation. But Clinton needed their help, he told them, to accomplish his legislative agenda.

Suggs—who would later become a founding member of "African Americans for Bond"—left the fund-raiser without going inside. And, eight days later, events validated his skepticism. With a fresh batch of campaign checks safely deposited in his account, Nixon filed another appeal in the case with the U.S. Supreme Court. "He lied to us," says DeClue.

Nixon said the appeal was routine and necessary. And even Nixon's critics concede that a majority of blacks will probably cast their lot with Nixon if for no other reason than that he is a Democrat and blacks are among the most reliably partisan of all Democratic] voting groups. "I think that we are doing fine in the African American community," Nixon told me after a campaign stop at a predominantly black nursing home in University City.

But, if the attorney general is actually going to unseat a sitting senator like Bond in the so-called Year of the Incumbent, he will have to do better than "fine." He will have to convince the Mischeauxs of Missouri to put away their picket signs. And, in a way, that may be even harder than settling the 26-year-old desegregation case. As St. Louis Mayor Clarence Harmon, one of Nixon's black supporters, points out, "Campaigns of this kind are emotional. They don't necessarily border on anything rational."

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Class, culture, and a little white ball.

THE GOLFING OF AMERICA

By Scott Stossel

While soccer possessed the planet for a month—shutting down whole cities, unleashing hooliganism across Europe, and even allowing prisoners in Thailand to slip past sports-obsessed guards—one country remained almost wholly unperturbed by the proceedings. The United States, practically alone among the countries of the Earth, failed to register the World Cup as anything more than a faint, outlying blip on the cultural radar screen. Whatever American enthusiasm there is for the sport—armadas of soccer moms notwithstanding—gets generated mainly by visiting Europeans or by immigrants from Latin America.

This speaks volumes about culture, class, economics, and national identity. As the late A. Bartlett Giamatti, the Renaissance scholar and Major League Baseball commissioner, once explained, if you want to know how a culture works, look at how—and what—it plays. Giamatti was thinking of baseball, which he thought would always be America's passion. Yet, in the years since his death in 1989, labor disputes, skyrocketing salaries, overexpansion, and boorish behavior (clearly, baseball remains a window on our society) have soured fans on the National Pastime. Basketball, football, hockey, and tennis have each vied for America's sporting heart—yet each, in turn, has been dragged down by prima donnas, attenuated talent bases, and labor conflicts.

So what *are* Americans playing and watching with the most enthusiasm? A strong case can be made that it's golf. More money—as much as $100 billion a year of it, by some reckonings—is spent on golf and its accoutrements than on any other sport. And its growth of late has been phenomenal. Between 1986 and 1997, according to the National Golf Foundation (NGF), the number of golfers in the United States increased by 24 percent to roughly 27 million. More than 300 new courses have been opened for play each year since 1990, and more than 1,500 are either being planned or under construction.

While golf's growth leveled off through the mid-1990s, the arrival of Tiger Woods and other young players has set the number of golfers climbing steeply upward again—by seven percent in 1997 alone. And the full effects of the earlier growth are only just now beginning to be felt. There are golf vacations, golf books, golf videos, and even a 24-hour golf cable channel. There are golf movies like *Tin Cup* and *Happy Gilmore* and golf magazines like *Golf*, *Golf World*, *Golf World International*, *Golf Digest*, *Links*, *Golf Monthly*, *Travel & Leisure Golf*, *Golf Journal*, and *Senior Golfer*—to name just a small selection. Nearly six million people watch golf each weekend on the major television networks alone, an increase of almost 20 percent from just two years ago.

In many small, subtle ways—the invention of casual day, for example, or the constant improvement in lawn care products—golf has insinuated itself into the warp and woof of American society. In fact, golf's growing cultural presence increasingly resembles a full-scale invasion, with implications for the environment (golf courses consume gigantic quantities of both water and former cropland), real estate (since 1990, the industry has built a half-million residential lots on golf courses and sold them for a total of $75 billion), fashion, technology, business, and gender- and race-relations, all of which have been greatly affected by its growth.

The mass middle-class pursuit of little white balls both reflects and catalyzes the continuing evolution of American society. If the typical golfer was once affluent, white, and early-middle-age (Jack Nicklaus in his prime, let's say), there is no longer a single, obvious golfer type. To be sure, there are the retirees (still white and affluent) and the boomers (mostly white and affluent), who comprise 45 percent of the golfing population and are fueling the trend. But there are also lots of black golfers, women golfers, and families that golf together. Golf, in other words, is beginning to look more like America: diverse, multicultural, and largely middle class.

If Giamatti was right about sport reflecting social values, then the explosion of golf raises some interesting questions. Will golf, with its rules and codes, its honor system, and its arch regulations of proper behavior, have a civilizing effect on our increasingly crude and unruly culture? Or will the depredations of modern culture drag golf down, infusing it with the boorishness and chaos of modern life? These questions are of course more freighted with meaning than they first appear. We might better ask them this way: Can golf impose its courtly mores without also imposing the racial and social

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exclusiveness on which this courtliness was once predicated? Must the essential character of golf change if it is to absorb a more representative range of classes and cultures? How compatible, really, are golf's aristocratic culture and America's multicultural democratic values?

When Tiger Woods donned the Masters' victor's green jacket in April 1997, golf lurched forward 30 years. Woods, part Asian and part African American, had won a tournament at a club that did not even admit its first black member until 1990. And his youth, his athleticism, his absolute physical domination of the world's most hallowed course probably did more to change the complexion of golf than any other single event in golf history. When Fuzzy Zoeller, a veteran tour professional, made his arguably racist comments about Woods at the time, his was merely the most overt and noxious expression of the general grumblings of the traditional golf establishment at having to assimilate a whole new style of golfer—young, strong, athletic, and of color.

Woods has clearly helped make golf cool—no small feat after decades of white shoes, polyester, and plaid. In a very short time, he's drawn many minorities and children—and probably some women, too—into golf's fold. But Woods's explosion onto the scene is really just the capstone on a profound change in the culture of the game that has been occurring gradually over the last eight or ten years. Once a bastion of the WASP elite, golf has finally crawled into the civil rights era. Twenty or 30 years ago, the only blacks you would see on a golf course were caddies; today, you'll rarely see a black caddie, but you'll see plenty of black players. Many prominent blacks are quite public about their devotion to the sport: pro basketball players like Michael Jordan and Charles Barkley are always trying to sneak a quick 18 holes between games; golf is the glue that binds Vernon Jordan to President Clinton. According to Paul David, cofounder of the National Minority Golf Association (NMGA), between 1992 and 1998 the number of black golfers increased from fewer than 700,000 to more than 4 million.

This is quite a change for a sport that has often been perceived as lily-white, and it has come—albeit belatedly—as a result of both legal decisions and a more tolerant cultural climate. For example, in 1990, Alabama's Shoal Creek course, site of that year's PGA championship, was harshly criticized when it was revealed to have not even a single black member. Advertisers, including IBM, promptly pulled $2 million of TV advertising. In response, the PGA drafted a policy stating that no PGA tour or event "will be held at any golf club that has membership practices or policies that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, or national origin." Since then, most of the clubs that still had rules prohibiting blacks, Jews, or Catholics on their books—and even in the 1990s, there were quite a few—removed them. And those clubs that had been practicing de facto discrimination tried to recruit minorities, if only token ones.

Behind this trend is the bald economic fact that the golf industry can't sustain its growth based on all-white country clubs and a WASP following when the companies that sponsor PGA events, for example, derive a quarter of their gross revenue from black patrons. So the United States Golf Association (USGA) has started making a more concerted effort to recruit minorities to the sport, funding GOLFWORKS, a program run by the New York Metropolitan Golf Association, that places at-risk minorities in jobs at New York-area golf courses. Similarly, the PGA's First Tee program aims to open 1,000 junior golf training facilities to attract youngsters—particularly inner-city youth—to the game. In a convenient marriage of profit and principle, Family Golf Centers plans to lease a decrepit 73-acre park in South Brooklyn and convert it into a nine-hole course and driving range. Funded by the USGA and corporations, Paul David's NMGA conducts golf clinics for black youth nationwide.

The sentiment commonly held in the golf universe is that getting more inner-city minorities to play golf can only be a good thing. The logic repeated again and again by both country club pros and CEOs is that there is something about internalizing the rules and etiquette of golf that leads to good comportment in society at large. Golf is based on the honor system: it's one of the few sports where the players are responsible for calling penalties on themselves, and golf etiquette prescribes rules of decorum not found in many other sports. An executive in the golf apparel industry told me, "I have kids ten and twelve. They watch football and the adjectives used are 'war,' 'attack,' 'assault'—and ultimately that becomes part of youth culture." In contrast, he says, "Golf teaches virtues and values, good lessons to be learned." At least four people I interviewed for this article told me, "You don't see players in golf choking their coaches," alluding to the recent Latrell Sprewell episode in the NBA.

One could argue that there is something implicitly racist about all this. What no one is openly stating is the belief that, if only this effete "white" game can be imported to the inner-city, then black kids can be "civilized" in a socially appropriate way. "White," in this understanding, translates to giving your opponent a mulligan or not moving your lie; "black" translates into dunking on your opponent and then trash-talking in his face. In this view, the imposition of golf represents a kind of cultural imperialism.

Paul David, however, sees things more benignly: "Integration in the world and in golf feed each other," he says, and there is clearly something to this. As society becomes more integrated, blending aspects of both "white" culture and "black" culture, so does golf. For example, Harvey Jones, CEO of the golf-clothing supplier Cutter & Buck, says that, as a result of the PGA's efforts in the inner city, you see more "flashy styles, more personal expression" on the golf course, things stereotypically associated with black culture. And Tiger Woods's presence on the pro tour has changed the etiquette of spectatorship: instead of dainty clapping after a long putt, there's great whooping and throwing of beer cups.

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In truth, the coarsening (as the traditionalists would have it) of golf has to do not with the racial integration of the game per se but rather with its general cultural and social extension down the ladder of social class. Golf arrived in this country as an almost exclusively aristocratic pursuit played originally (along with hunting, riding, and cricket) only on large country estates and then later at highly exclusive private clubs. Though there were a handful of public golf courses early on, they didn't have a significant presence until at least the 1930s. Today, the situation is reversed. According to the NGF, 70 percent of the nation's courses are public, and about 90 percent of those being developed will also be public.

Such places are in sharp contrast to The Country Club in Brookline, Massachusetts, the oldest and probably the most distinguished private country club in the country. Its membership consists of doctors, lawyers, professors, people of great wealth and social status; its membership list is full of Lodges, Hunnewells, and Saltonstalls. To stroll around its neatly manicured grounds is to see golf the way it used to be: exclusive, white, and affluent. Elderly couples walk arm in arm in formal clothes on a Saturday afternoon, stopping by the club for lunch. Middle-age white men, fit and trim in their Nantucket-preppy golf gear, drop in with requests for head pro Brendan Walsh, who addresses every member formally. "Hello, Brendan," a member will say. "Are my clubs ready?" "Good morning, Mr. Cabot. Yes they are. Billy will bring them around the front." With its tennis pavilion and dining room, as well as an assortment of other buildings housing, among other things, squash courts and a curling rink, The Country Club could pass for a college campus or even an old Southern plantation—except that there's not a person of color in sight.

The Country Club is a thriving bastion of golf traditionalism. But what it represents is the golf of the past. "Golf is not a rich man's game anymore," says Dan Cammarata, the pro at the Georgetown Club, in Georgetown, Massachusetts, about 30 miles north of The Country Club. "It costs less than going to a hockey game." Statistics confirm that golf is an increasingly middle-class sport, broadly defined. Nationally, the household income of the average golfer is $59,970—middle-upper-middle-class range. Most tellingly, fully 38 percent of the club's golfers are from households headed by blue-collar or clerical workers. The Georgetown Club, like its Brookline neighbor, has doctors and lawyers, but it also has assembly-line workers and policemen. It doesn't have a formal dining room, but it does have a grill bar that might be described as institutional-nice; in fact, with its plastic flowers, faux old paintings on the walls, and pleasant conversational hum, it reminds me of my grandfather's retirement community. On a Friday evening, the grillroom is filled with a mixture of brash young stockbrokers, elderly couples, groups of women golfers, and young families with small children. This is the future of golf: inclusive, diverse, middle-class. "We've got everyone here from postmen to businessmen," Cammarata says.

For the moment, the Georgetown Club is, like many new clubs, semi-private—it has dues-paying members who get preferential tee times and special clubhouse privileges as well as nonmembers who pay one-time greens fees to play. By October the club hopes to have reached its 360 membership capacity and go fully private. But "private" means something different from what it did in the past. At the elite country clubs, attaining membership was ultimately predicated on passing muster with a membership committee concerned to admit only "the right kind of people." While established country clubs continue to screen potential members in this way, almost all new ones work as the Georgetown Club does: Anyone who pays gets in until the club is full; after that, members are accepted off a waiting list on a first-come, first-serve basis. "Membership committees are a thing of the past," says Cammarata.

Despite the loosening of membership restrictions, however, one segment of the population has still had trouble gaining access to the links. While women now represent 21 percent of all U.S. golfers—and 32 percent of all beginning golfers—they have had to combat a long legacy of discrimination in golf. "In all my years in the sport," Dan Cammarata says, "I've never seen active discrimination against minorities. But women having equal rights—that's a more recent development."

For years at private country clubs—and some public ones—only men were allowed to play on Saturday mornings and on Wednesday and Friday afternoons. It was understood that men had to work during the week. Women were relegated to special "Ladies' Days," usually Tuesdays and Thursdays, while men got first rights on all other tee times. Over the last 20 years, more and more women have entered the workforce. Yet, until very recently, country clubs had not altered their tee-time restrictions, and women were effectively left unable to play. While a male CEO could take his clients on a golf outing on a Friday afternoon, a female CEO could not.

A raft of lawsuits over the last few years has forced a number of clubs to change their membership and tee-time restrictions, and the general drift in even elite country club culture is greater parity for men and women. Yet pockets of the most traditional clubs have remained stubbornly resistant to social trends, and it is very difficult for the federal government to intervene in country club membership practices without trampling on the constitutional right to private association. Some states have tried to withhold food or liquor licenses, or to remove tax breaks, but sometimes even those measures don't work. The venerable Burning Tree Club in Bethesda, Maryland, has never had a woman member or guest in its 76 years of existence. Women are allowed to enter the premises at Christmastime—but then only to visit the pro shop to buy presents for their member husbands. Maryland golf clubs benefit from a state law granting massive tax abatements to golf clubs that agree not to sell their land for development, but the law is

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supposed to apply only to those clubs abiding by nondiscriminatory policies. In 1989, the U.S. Supreme Court let stand a Maryland appeals court decision stripping Burning Tree of its tax benefit unless it effaced its all-male bylaw. The club voted: Members paid $1.2 million in back taxes and agreed to pay future assessments rather than admit women.

If women were fighting for equal rights on the golf course merely as a matter of principle, their time might be better spent elsewhere. Yet a good case can be made that tangible economic benefits redound to those with easy access to the links. In 1994, a poll reported in *The Washington Post* found that 70 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs regularly did business on the golf course. Dave Richards, president of Golf Marketing Services in Birmingham, Michigan, told me that, for example, General Motors "is basically run out of the Bloomfield Hills Country Club." And *The New York Times* recently published a study demonstrating a clear association between a CEO's handicap and his company's performance. There is even a company called Business Golf Strategies, which teaches companies how to sell on the golf course. (Some general guidelines: The first four holes are for building rapport, getting the client into the "comfort zone." Holes five through 15 are for talking business. After that, stop discussing business: holes 16 through 18 are for making sure your customer is enjoying himself. By this point, you should be building toward the 19th hole—the clubhouse bar. The 20th hole is the payoff, back at the customer's office.)

However, the cultures of golf and business are changing in tandem, and golf product development is changing accordingly. For the first time, golf-equipment manufacturers (whose stocks are a hot commodity on Wall Street) are investing in and researching the needs of the growing female market. Nancy Oliver, the founder of the Executive Women's Golf Association in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, explains that men have always been able to wear clothes "that don't shout, 'Hey, I'm going to play golf.' A man can wear khakis and a golf shirt to work on casual day and no one will know he's just waiting to scoot out to the links. A woman couldn't fit in on casual day. Now manufacturers are addressing this by making clothes you can play golf in but that don't look explicitly like a golf outfit." And now that golf wear has become appropriate for off the course—a sure sign of golf's social penetration—department store clothing manufacturers like Izod and Liz Claiborne have started making golf lines.

It's not just golf clothes that have become hip. All things golf are now seen to be desirable. If you watch television today, you'll notice that a surprising number of advertisements for nongolf products—cars, credit cards, financial services—have golf themes. If you want to sell a product, invoke golf. It's become an emblem of middle-class consumer life.

There is at the heart of golf a peculiar contradiction that helps explain its unique status within American society. While golf is resolutely aristocratic in its genealogy and tradition, it has at its core a mechanism that is social democratic in its redistributive capacity: The handicap system, part of the essence of golf, is a great equalizing force, allowing skilled golfers to compete with inept duffers. Steeped in tradition, golf remains in some sense a "gentleman's game"; yet this socialist device, the handicap, gives the sport at least an egalitarian sheen. There is an unresolved tension between the sport's aristocratic hauteur and its anyone-can-play-anyone handicap system.

This contradiction extends to golf's larger social presence. Propelled by its aristocratic legacy of *noblesse oblige*, the game has always produced philanthropists and humanitarians concerned to help the less privileged with scholarship aid like the Evans Scholarships, which provide $7 million in scholarships to "deserving caddies" in the Midwest each year. Many people I talked to in the industry said that "golf people are good people." Yet golf people, at least the old ones, are sternly conservative about their game and jealously guard its traditions against the incursions of newfangled technologies and the unbridled expressiveness of Tiger Woods fans. Even Marcia Chambers, the author of a scathing 1995 book called *The Unplayable Lie: The Untold Story of Women and Discrimination in American Golf*, told me she worries that time-honored standards of etiquette and dress will erode as more kids and people not familiar with golf traditions begin to play. Golf people, the older generation, may well be good people—but they are also a product of an older time and a different culture, and their anxieties about changes in the game reflect more general anxieties about changes in our increasingly multiracial, multiethnic, American society. The golf aristocrats—and I'm generalizing here—would prefer to limit the handicap system to the game itself and don't want its equalizing ethos extended to opening the game to a richer mélange of classes and races.

However, American society is becoming louder and more diverse; inevitably, golf will, too. After all, America's future looks less like the monochromatic, monoclassist Country Club and more like an amalgam of the Georgetown Club and an even more downmarket relation: the Franklin Park Club in Dorchester, Massachusetts. The Franklin Park Club, the second-oldest public course in the country, is a popular municipal course where about 60 percent of the players are black and the outfit of choice is as likely to be basketball shoes and tank top as khakis and golf shirt. The Franklin Park Club does not have squash or curling like The Country Club. Its clubhouse is rowdier, its greens a lot mangier, and its dingy snack bar seems to serve mainly french fries and beer. ("3 DRINK LIMIT," says the sign on the door.) But, although the Franklin Park Club is in the middle of one of Boston's most impoverished, most crime-ridden communities, the course is a large oasis of peace and racial harmony. And, while the Franklin Park Club is a far, far cry from The Country Club, the golf—purists will be happy to know—is the same. •

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Learning to live with nuclear weapons—again.

THE RETURN OF THE BOMB

By Peter Beinart

The earth shook, and a dust cloud blotted the sky, but what happened on May 11 in the Rajasthan desert did not change the world. Everyone knew that India could make a bomb, and everyone knew that it could set one off—in fact, it had done so before, at the same place, in the same month, 24 years earlier. But few had cared to think about it. So the May 11 explosion reintroduced many people, especially Americans, to the world in which they already lived.

That reintroduction marks the end of a decade-long hiatus during which commentators and politicians often acted as if nuclear weapons no longer defined our age. In the United States, theories about America's place in the post-cold-war world sprouted from intellectual terrain undarkened by the shadow of the bomb. Now the terrain itself feels changed. We are returning to an era like the cold war—where foreign policy debates are simultaneously nuclear debates. And all the ideological contestants will have to adjust.

The ideological contestants in post-cold-war America are basically three. The first, strong early in the decade but weakening ever since, takes its cue from the democratic revolutions of 1989 and from the West's moral failure in Bosnia. It combines a faith in the universality of liberal government with a belief that American power can aggressively promote it abroad. Its adherents, linked by their common distaste for realism and relativism, range from the human rights left to the neoconservative right, from *Dissent* to *The Weekly Standard*.

The second school also maintains a long-term optimism about the spread of American ideals but is wary of missionary liberalism when it conflicts with the ruling elites of other societies—for instance, in China. It takes refuge from such conflict in commercialism. Rather than condemning hostile governments, it tries to bring them into international institutions that facilitate economic integration. Global economic pressures, it is believed, will do liberalism's work without forcing the United States to make enemies. To the extent the Clinton administration has a consistent foreign policy, this is it.

The third school sees both liberal intervention and commercial engagement as promiscuous and naïve. Theorists like Harvard political scientist Samuel Huntington deny that liberalism is universal and predict that its advocacy will spawn endless conflict with cultures alien to the West. Their lodestars—nationalism and relativism—lead them to advocate a defensive foreign policy based on America's core interests.

These three schools of thought are the products of a decade untroubled by nuclear weapons. But the intellectual commotion caused by May 11 offers a glimpse of their embryonic nuclear answers—and perhaps even a glimpse of how those answers will compete. Dominating the competition will be one overriding fact about the bomb: Those who possess it hold the fate of large chunks of humanity in their hands. That reality will, over time, undermine ideologies that remain complacent about the way other peoples are governed. And liberal interventionism—an ideology now seen as romantic, even quaint—will come to define American foreign policy in the second nuclear age.

In his radio address to the nation five days after the Rajasthan nuclear test, Bill Clinton referred to treaties twelve times. He implored India to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. He heralded the extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which he wants India to sign as well. He noted America's agreement with Russia on a second Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. Two weeks later, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright added a call for India to join discussions on a treaty to end the production of fissile material.

This thicket of agreements represents the Clinton administration's emerging response to the problem of a nuclear post-cold-war world. It is a response that flows from the administration's foreign policy more broadly. That foreign policy has grown out of a particular dilemma: how to change troublesome governments without seeming to meddle in their internal affairs. The Clintonites' answer is to involve them in international institutions, norms, and treaties, which they will join out of self-interest, and whose liberal values they will gradually internalize. The self-interest usually involves a desire to reap the benefits of the global economy. Countries like China and Indonesia, the logic goes, will seek to join organizations like the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund to gain foreign investment. Such institu-

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tions will require that they accept market principles (property rights, public access to financial information, etc.), which will foster the rule of law and make them more free and less dangerous.

In the nuclear sphere, the Clinton administration is placing its faith in treaties that require countries to restrict their nuclear weapons programs in exchange for peaceful nuclear energy and other economic benefits. By law, the administration had to impose sanctions on India and Pakistan for their nuclear tests. But days after imposing them, administration officials were telling reporters that they would seek to lift the sanctions if India signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and joined talks to stop the production of fissile material.

The Indian government is considering signing the Comprehensive Test Ban—a move the Clinton administration would hail as a major victory. But the willingness of a government dead set on becoming a nuclear power to sign a treaty that supposedly limits that ability should raise red flags. For the Clinton administration's treaty-based response to the spread of nuclear weapons to work, the treaties must come to define the regimes that sign them. The danger is that the regimes end up defining the treaties instead.

Consider an Indian signature on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Since India has just finished five nuclear tests, such an agreement would be like closing a barn door after the horse had left—especially since New Delhi can always use computer simulations based on the new data instead of further explosions. Treaty proponents argue that India's signature would give the test ban more prestige, thwarting other would-be testers. But nuclear aspirants might draw a different lesson: test, which gives you a reliable nuclear deterrent, and then sign the Comprehensive Test Ban, which erases the stigma.

Of course, it's possible that the Comprehensive Test Ban isn't the treaty that matters. The CTBT was part of a deal to indefinitely extend the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995. The NPT is based on a bargain between the established nuclear powers and everyone else. The non-nuclear signatories agree not to seek the bomb on the condition that the nuclear signatories provide them with peaceful nuclear energy and move toward abolishing their existing supply of nukes. The CTBT, which makes it harder for the nuclear powers to modernize their arsenals, was seen as a step toward fulfilling their part of the deal. If the CTBT never gets the signatures it needs to go into effect, that could weaken the NPT.

By this logic, the pressure on India is really an indirect effort to preserve the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which keeps lots of other countries from getting the bomb. But does it? To verify that signatories are not secretly pursuing nuclear weapons, the NPT obligates them to accept inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). But, throughout the 1980s, Iraq was a signatory in good standing to the NPT, and it passed two inspections a year for the entire decade. Meanwhile, it had 20,000 people working on a $10 billion program aimed at getting the bomb.

The IAEA failed because it relies on those it monitors. The IAEA checks that a country's declared peaceful nuclear materials are not diverted for military use. But, when countries conduct separate nuclear programs that they don't disclose in the first place, the agency is close to helpless.

Ever since the IAEA's Iraq fiasco, the Clinton administration has tried to empower the agency to conduct more rigorous inspections. But most countries have not allowed the IAEA to intrude further into their affairs, and their refusal points to a larger problem with the NPT and with the Clinton administration's reliance on treaties more broadly. The NPT, like all international agreements, is based on mutual consent and the sovereign equality of states; it makes no moral distinctions among different regimes. At times during the 1980s, Iraq sat on the IAEA's Board of Governors. As recently as 1992, Libya and Syria were elected. Several years ago nonproliferation expert David Kay noted the astonishing fact that 55 percent of the IAEA's inspection budget went to investigate Germany, Japan, and Canada—because they were the countries that had declared the largest amounts of peaceful nuclear material.

A comparison of the IAEA and UNSCOM, the team empowered by the Security Council to inspect post-Gulf war Iraq, highlights the point. IAEA inspections were premised on the assumption that Iraq was no more likely to seek nuclear weapons than was Canada. They assumed Iraqi sovereignty and goodwill—inspectors were discouraged from carrying pocket-size "global positioning satellites" that would have let them verify that they were being taken to the location they requested, because doing so would imply "a lack of trust." The U.N. inspection team, by contrast, has always assumed that Iraq is seeking nuclear weapons unless proven otherwise, and the unrestricted violation of Iraqi sovereignty was part of its mandate (at least until Kofi Annan's deal with Saddam this past February).

Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait gave the United States and the Security Council an excuse to do what the IAEA could not. But what will the United States do when it lacks that excuse? The spread of technical information and materials has dramatically accelerated

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the bomb-building process. To separate uranium isotopes, Saddam's henchmen used unclassified data from the Manhattan Project. The former Soviet Union currently houses 900 tons of weapons-grade plutonium within its chaotic and demoralized military establishments, and making a bomb requires only four to seven kilograms. Within a few years, several impoverished tyrannies—North Korea and Iran, for instance—may build deliverable nuclear weapons.

The prospect exposes a fudge at the heart of the Clinton administration's ideology of commercial engagement: Can we afford to respect the sovereignty of dictatorships or not? The administration tries to have it both ways—by saying both that authoritarian governments will respect international agreements and that those agreements will turn them into liberal democracies. But the proliferation of nuclear weapons forces the issue. If the global institutions designed to convince troublesome regimes to institute patent laws, protect the environment, or improve human rights do not succeed, their failure does not endanger American security. If governments remain tyrannical and nonnuclear, our policy toward them has been a failure but not a catastrophe.

But, if they remain tyrannical and develop the bomb, then their form of government potentially threatens entire regions of the world. And that requires either a much greater willingness to violate their sovereignty or an acknowledgment that tyrannies are not inherently more dangerous than democracies. The latter position is reassuring, but its advocates must convince Americans that nuclear dictatorships share something with nuclear democracies that makes them fundamentally, essentially, safe. To do that, they are increasingly relying on a 30-page paper written 17 years ago by a professor of international relations named Kenneth Waltz.

In the fall of 1981, Kenneth N. Waltz, then a professor at the University of California at Berkeley, wrote a paper for London's International Institute for Strategic Studies titled "The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better." The article started with a well-known axiom of international relations theory: Nuclear weapons change the nature of war by vastly improving deterrence. Deterrence is the security a state receives not from its ability to defend itself against attack but from its ability to inflict punishment in retaliation. In a conventional conflict, the value of deterrence is limited. If an attacker destroys 90 percent of your weapons, you can strike back, but with such limited force that he may find the cost bearable. If your weapons are nuclear missiles, however, that remaining ten percent will inflict catastrophic damage.

Waltz argued that nuclear weapons, by dramatically improving deterrence, had kept the United States and the Soviet Union from launching a third world war. And he predicted that the principles that kept peace between the superpowers would keep peace wherever nuclear deterrence spread. The ideology and culture of newly nuclear countries was irrelevant because, for Waltz, nuclear weapons defined those who possessed them. Even deluded, fanatical leaders only attacked when they saw some prospect of success. And, faced with a rival possessing the capacity for a retaliatory nuclear strike, the ambiguity on which such self-delusion depended would evaporate. Dictators might worry less than democrats about sacrificing large numbers of their people in war, but they would be at least as determined to preserve their hold on power—and that hold would be substantially imperiled by an incoming barrage of nuclear missiles. Hitler, Waltz suggested, would never have invaded Poland had he known the result would be the certain and immediate destruction of Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, and Hamburg.

Waltz's article, relatively obscure during the cold war, has in recent months infiltrated the public debate. The reason is that it powerfully buttresses an increasingly influential school of foreign policy thinking which maintains that the United States cannot export liberal government. The school's most influential proponent, Samuel Huntington, argues that the best way to minimize international conflict is for the West to tend to its own affairs and let the dominant powers of other civilizations run theirs as they see fit. But the bomb's return to public consciousness presents Huntington and his followers with a problem. It's one thing for the United States not to care if India skirmishes with Pakistan or if Iraq menaces Kuwait. It's quite another when such conflicts might result in nuclear war.

That's where Waltz—with his argument that nuclear deterrence overrides cultural and ideological differences and preserves peace—comes in. His influence over the past several months has been noticeable. After India's test, George Will questioned American pressure on Pakistan not to test as well, noting that "for 50 years, U.S. policy was that nuclear deterrence (remember 'mutually assured destruction') can be conducive to stability. Now U.S. policy is to tell Pakistan that a nuclear imbalance is crucial to stability in South Asia." Six days after the Rajasthan explosion, on the op-ed page of *The New York Times*, University of Chicago political scientist John Mearsheimer called India's decision to test "reasonable strategic logic" and advised American policymakers to "learn to live with the spread of nuclear weapons in the decades ahead."

The problem with Waltz's argument is that it tries to prove a negative: that countries with nuclear deterrents do not fight one another. All we know for sure is that they have not so far. And Waltz's prime example—the absence of war between the U.S. and USSR—could be explained by other factors. The superpowers fought by proxy on distant Third World battlegrounds where one side could lose without endangering its survival. By contrast, a quick Indian incursion would put its troops on the outskirts of Lahore, Pakistan's second-largest city. Could the Pakistani government allow it to fall?

Moreover, Waltz's argument that nuclear deterrence

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makes tyrants cautious is a bit optimistic. He claims that nuclear weapons eliminate ambiguity as to the consequences of an attack. But they only eliminate ambiguity about a defender's capability, not its intentions. Defenders do not respond to all incursions by pushing the nuclear button; they launch nuclear weapons only when the threat reaches a desperate threshold. A dictator cloistered from reality could misjudge that threshold. Saddam rained missiles on Tel Aviv despite Israel's veiled threats of a nuclear response. Israel did not retaliate, of course. But what if the warheads had been filled with chemical gas?

Taken together, the arguments of Waltz and Huntington sound strangely familiar. The claim that nuclear weapons render the regimes that possess them essentially the same oddly echoes the peace activists of the 1980s who argued that the superpowers' possession of the bomb eliminated any meaningful distinction between the two. Back then, the equalizing effect of nuclear weapons allowed left-wing relativists to opt out of the moral conflict posed by the cold war. Today, the equalizing effect of nuclear weapons allows right-wing relativists to opt out of the moral conflicts posed by the post-cold war. For the Clinton administration, nuclear weapons signify too little. For Waltz and those in whose steps he treads, they signify too much.

If Clintonism finds its answer to May 11 in the rules of the international community, and Waltzism finds its answer in the weapons, the third ideological contender—liberal interventionism—looks for answers in the character of different regimes. At first glance, they don't seem easy to find.

Explanations of India's decision have frequently focused not on its government but on its international position. To its northeast, India borders China, a country that dwarfs it in military strength, has claims against its territory, and arms its sworn enemy, Pakistan. During the 1970s and 1980s, India won security against China and Pakistan through its friendship with the Soviet Union. Today, the USSR is gone, and the United States is selling Beijing sophisticated technology. So, lacking a superpower's nuclear umbrella, and facing a threatening nuclear power on its border, India decided to remind the neighborhood that it, too, has bombs in the basement.

Many American conservatives have embraced this argument because it offers them a way to blame Bill Clinton. Clinton, the argument goes, dealt military technology to the Chinese in garage-sale fashion, which terrified New Delhi, which responded with nuclear tests. But in fact India's decision was a reflection of internal rather than external forces; the Clinton administration's relationship with China had nothing to do with it. On the day before its nuclear test, India's relations with China were better than they had been for years. In late 1996, Jiang Zemin received a lavish welcome in New Delhi, and the two countries agreed to partially demilitarize the disputed territory near the site of their 1962 war. Around the same time, Beijing abandoned work on the Dong Feng 25, the only Chinese missile designed to hit the Indian heartland (China's other missiles have ranges either too short or too long). The supposedly menacing Chinese government even let its businessmen sell India materials for its civilian nuclear energy program—something American companies were banned from doing on nonproliferation grounds. As Vinod Mehta wrote in India's prestigious *Outlook* magazine after the tests, "India's security environment in the last few years has not deteriorated, in fact it has improved marginally; there are no new threats to India's security from any country. There are, however, plenty of threats to the security of Mr. Vajpayee's prime ministership."

It is with Prime Minister Vajpayee or, more precisely, with the conditions that brought him to power that the liberal interventionist school begins its response to Rajasthan. The country that tested three bombs on May 11 was a democracy, but it was a democracy that had, in critical respects, been failing. And those failures had brought a fundamentally illiberal movement to power.

In May 1991, a small woman approached Rajiv Gandhi at an election rally in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, detonating the explosives that she concealed under her clothing, and blowing them and 16 others to pieces. Rajiv Gandhi's death serves as both a starting point and a metaphor for the crisis of Indian democracy that would bring Atal Bihari Vajpayee to power seven years later.

The son of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and the grandson of India's patriarch, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajiv was the heir to a family that had provided India with the only stable government it had known in its four-decade history. The apparent end of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty would by itself have shaken India's political system. But, as it happened, the dynasty fell just as other foundation stones of Indian democracy also began to crumble. Since independence, nonalignment had defined Indian foreign policy, socialism had defined its economic policy, and secularism had defined its cultural policy. But, by the early 1990s, the end of the cold war was rendering nonalignment meaningless, and global integration was making socialism impossible. And then, a year and a half after Rajiv's death, a Hindu mob tore apart India's Babri Mosque, posing the most audacious challenge to secularism the country had ever seen.

Rajiv Gandhi's Congress Party, led by the learned but uncharismatic P.V. Narasimha Rao, won the elections that followed the assassination. Rao struggled to shift Indian democracy to a new footing—governing without dynastic authority, reasserting secularism and instituting dramatic market reforms aimed at linking India to the West. But he failed to build a constituency for liberalization outside the business elite. And the corruption endemic to Indian politics swallowed his government and drove him from office in disgrace. After Rao, the absence of a governing ideology left Indian politics in a

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state of near-permanent chaos. Coalition government after coalition government collapsed, necessitating fresh elections, which produced more fragile, aimless coalitions, which collapsed again. In the past nine years, India has suffered seven different governments.

As frustration grew, the Bharatiya Janata Party, the party of the mob that destroyed the Babri Mosque, saw its star rise. The party had long been a political pariah. But, as the decade progressed, instability bred a hunger for order and a tolerance of authoritarianism. The BJP moderated its anti-Muslim rhetoric and played up its reputation as less corrupt. And, in March of this year, the BJP formed a ruling coalition, with Atal Bihari Vajpayee as prime minister.

Vajpayee's nuclear test was in part a political ploy. By inciting nationalist fervor, the BJP silenced its fractious coalition partners—assuring the stability of its government and perhaps even paving the way for new elections that could give the party an outright majority. But Rajasthan was also the genuine expression of a movement that worships military power (some BJP cadres want to build a shrine at the test site) and sees it as central to the restoration of a Hindu pride emasculated by foreign domination. Party literature is replete with statements like, "The Hindu urge to dominate after a thousand years of ignominy and enslavement needs to be understood." Explicit nuclear capability has been a Hindu nationalist goal since 1951 (13 years before China went nuclear)—less for strategic reasons than because it accorded with the movement's alternative vision of national identity. May 11 was part of an effort to change much more than military doctrine. As India's liberal *Frontline* magazine put it, "To see the ... tests as a natural culmination of India's nuclear policy from the 1950s is not only naïve but harmful to the very basis of a secular democratic Indian state."

The Rajasthan blast, far from arising from India's strategic environment, offers vivid evidence of the way nuclear weapons grow out of a regime's character. That relationship becomes even clearer in light of three remarkable stories of post-cold-war denuclearization—three stories of countries that abandoned their nuclear programs as they became liberal democracies. Tracing denuclearization in Argentina, Brazil, and South Africa is like watching what has happened in India in reverse.

One day, in the summer of 1990, Brazilian President Fernando Collor bundled his country's top reporters into the presidential jet and flew to a secret military base in the Amazon jungle. Upon disembarking, he led them to a 280-meter-deep hole in the ground. In that hole, the military governments that preceded Collor had planned to one day test a nuclear bomb.

Generals ruled Brazil until 1985, when economic disaster forced them to abdicate. A junta ran Argentina until 1983, when it was discredited by its defeat in the Falklands War. For close to a decade, both countries had worked secretly to enrich uranium and chemically separate plutonium for the production of nuclear bombs. The men elected to replace the generals took office knowing little about their countries' nuclear efforts. But the civilians had two main goals: eliminate vestiges of authoritarian politics and open up their economies to the world. The drive for nuclear weapons undermined both. It gave the military an excuse to wield political power, it diverted resources from the civilian economy, and it hurt relations with Western trading partners. In 1985, civilian Presidents Raúl Alfonsín of Argentina and José Sarney of Brazil formed a joint commission to investigate the two nations' nuclear programs. The commission recommended mutual inspections of all Argentine and Brazilian nuclear sites, and both presidents endorsed the decision. On November 28, 1990, their successors, Carlos Menem and Fernando Collor, signed a joint statement disavowing the pursuit of nuclear weapons and opening their nations to review by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Unbeknownst to Menem, Collor, or any other world leader, South African President F.W. de Klerk had several months before made exactly the same decision. South Africa's nuclear program began in earnest in the late 1970s, sparked by rising domestic and international protest following the 1976 Soweto uprising and growing regional conflict as Cuban troops streamed into Angola.

By the time de Klerk took power in September 1989, the end of the cold war was already bringing peace to southern Africa. Moscow's global retreat, and the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola, had convinced his predecessor, P.W. Botha, to end Pretoria's occupation of Namibia. For his part, de Klerk immediately looked for ways to reduce the low-level civil war taking place within South Africa's borders. And he simultaneously ordered a review of the country's decade-old nuclear program—which by that point had produced six bombs. Roughly six months after taking office, and within weeks of his decision to release Nelson Mandela from jail, de Klerk ordered the bombs dismantled. One year later, he enrolled South Africa in the Non-Proliferation Treaty and invited the IAEA to "go anywhere, anytime."

In all three countries, abandoning the bomb stemmed from a change in the political system. Argentina, Brazil, and South Africa launched secret nuclear programs when their militaries were at the height of political influence. In Argentina and Brazil, generals actually ruled. In South Africa, the nuclear decision coincided with a tripling of the defense budget and a declaration that Pretoria faced a domestic and international "total onslaught." And, when they dismantled their nuclear programs, leaders of all three countries took broader steps to reduce the military's power. In India, the opposite has occurred: Days after the Rajasthan test, the government announced it was dramatically hiking defense spending, reversing years of reductions.

In Argentina, Brazil, and South Africa, the govern-

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ments that denuclearized simultaneously shed their siege mentality. As Mitchell Reiss notes in his book *Bridled Ambition*, Argentina and Brazil formed their joint nuclear commission after solving a long-festering dispute over water resources. And they began a process of economic reform that would lead to the Mercosur free-trade zone. South Africa dismantled its bombs as part of a larger effort to end debilitating international isolation. The BJP, by contrast, has broken off its predecessor's negotiations with secessionists in Kashmir, and its interior minister has called for a new policy that will let its army chase rebels across the border into Pakistan. The Indian foreign ministry was not even forewarned of the decision to test. And the BJP was willing to endure nonproliferation sanctions because it had long been hostile to foreign investment on nationalist grounds anyway.

Argentina, South Africa, and Brazil are all now signatories to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. But, critically for liberal interventionists, their adherence was a consequence of their decision to denuclearize, not a cause. The cause was a change of government.

Argentina, Brazil, and South Africa illustrate a truth that has been largely overlooked since May 11: Countries do not inevitably pursue the bomb. Nuclear weapons can hinder the economic and political progress that liberal governments prize. The lesson for American policy is that nonproliferation cannot be separated from political development. An administration that is tough on proliferation but soft on authoritarianism is divided against itself.

For close to a decade, India searched for a path from its crumbling dynastic democracy to a truly liberal democracy able to reinterpret national identity in a new age. The critical challenges were the tremendous corruption that undermined India's secular parties and the wrenching effort to liberalize India's economy. During this time, America badgered India to sign nonproliferation treaties, but it had barely any National Endowment for Democracy projects there and ranked sixth among aid-givers overall. And, when the BJP took power, barely anyone in the administration seemed to notice that the process had gone dangerously wrong. As *Frontline* wrote despairingly after the BJP's victory, "Nobody in the Clinton administration lost sleep over the possible electoral outcome when India went to the polls, nor has the BJP's assumption of power left anybody scratching his or her head."

Of course, promoting liberal democracy in India and promoting liberal democracy in North Korea or Iraq are far different things. But the Clinton administration does not seem to think in such terms about those countries either. Although it has offered billions to the North Korean government to adhere to nonproliferation agreements, the U.S., according to one recent study, has "no concrete designs for hastening" reunification on the peninsula. In Iraq, the Clinton administration acts as if Saddam's nuclear program were an artificial encrustation on his regime rather than an expression of its essential nature. And its attempts to deal with one without the other are coming back to haunt it as international support for the U.N. inspection effort weakens.

The United States has worried that aiding the opposition to Saddam might split Iraq apart—such fears even kept the Bush administration from acting in early 1991, when 14 of Iraq's 18 provinces were in revolt. And today the Clinton administration remains cool to the multiethnic, freely elected Iraqi National Congress. But the victory of such a democratic movement would provide the best protection against the threat of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. A policy of expanding military exclusion zones in Iraq's north, south, and west, helping the INC establish a provisional government on Iraqi soil, and lifting sanctions on the areas it controls could put Saddam's regime in jeopardy. If such a strategy risks splitting Iraq, America must weigh it against the risk of a nuclear Saddam.

Ultimately, nuclear answers can never be fully proved right. They can only be proved wrong. And maybe only proved wrong once. So, ironically, although Americans will judge post-cold-war theories of foreign policy by how safe they seem to make us from nuclear weapons, that feeling of safety will be based on how they respond to everything else. The advantage of liberal interventionism is that, unlike the Clinton administration's focus on treaties, or Kenneth Waltz's unlimited faith in deterrence, it integrates the struggle against nuclear weapons into a larger struggle to ensure that people are governed well. And its nonproliferation strategy, therefore, even if it cannot fully rid of us of the bomb, pays dividends against jingoism and repression. In our era, when the absence of a global ideological foe makes it easy to deny any relationship between the spread of our principles abroad and our security at home, the connection between nuclear weapons and human rights may be critical to thwarting America's renascent isolationism. By uniting the two, liberal interventionism furnishes a vision that was almost impossible during the cold war: a peace movement that is also a movement for democracy. In such a vision, nuclear weapons create a community of moral obligation based on self-interest. And the struggle for liberal government becomes a struggle not simply for justice but for survival. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

A Cop and a Robber

Justice for Clooney! If the cry didn't exactly ring from coast to coast two years ago, still some of us burned with it. In 1996 George Clooney costarred with Michelle Pfeiffer in *One Fine Day*, an amiable comedy-romance built with 1930s neatness. It seemed to be insured for success. It failed. Pfeiffer, being Pfeiffer, was scatheless, but Clooney, doing a sexy, wittily burnished job as the man who would get the girl but didn't even like her at the start—yes, that 1930s role—was inadequately appreciated. Injustice is just a touch more prevalent than justice, especially in the arts, yet, in sheer entertainment equity, Clooney had been bilked.

Now comes restitution. After two intervening films of different species, Clooney appears in another comedy, **Out of Sight** (Universal), and apparently he's going to get the success he deserves. Huzzah! This film is no more enjoyable than the last comedy, but it's a 1990s story with up-to-date tone and ethos. Clooney, dark and tall, husky without being heavy, is teamed with Jennifer Lopez, luscious, cool, with snappy comic timing, possibly more limited than Pfeiffer but no less sexy. They have a supporting cast that is punching all the way and a director who knows how to do what needs to be done. Result: pleasure.

An Elmore Leonard novel was adapted for the screenplay by Scott Frank (who adapted Leonard for *Get Shorty*). Clooney plays a bank robber who, at the start, perpetrates a clever bank robbery in Florida, except that the getaway car stalls. Back to jail he goes—back because he has already done time. Subsequently he escapes. And who is one of the FBI agents assigned to track him? Lopez, naturally.

Complications follow, criminal and romantic. The film moves through a slosh of dark doings with a cynical comic touch and—or else why make the FBI agent female?—with some glandular heavy breathing. The doings are helped in different ways by Ving Rhames as Clooney's pal and collaborator, Don Cheadle as a felonious serpent, Steve Zahn as a tremulous druggie, and Albert Brooks as a multimillionaire jailbird in the clink for insider trading.

The camera work by Elliott Davis is so good that it's intrusive. Much of the time when we're alone with Lopez and Clooney we feel we really oughtn't to be watching but are glad we're there. What a relief after all those sex scenes where we feel we're being forced to watch.

The glow of intimacy, along with the other glows and glints along the way, initially derives from the skill of Stephen Soderbergh, the director. This is a surprise. Soderbergh made his debut in 1989 with *sex, lies and videotape*, his own script, which established a unique style, reticent yet corkscrewing into people's secrets. He then proceeded to disestablish that style, laboring through *Kafka*, *King of the Hill*, and others. These attempted to be films of distinction and in small ways they succeeded, but none of them had the wholeness and individuality of his first film. Now, quite out of character—anyway, what we thought was his character—he presents this bright commercial film. Further, Soderbergh seems much more at ease with this deftly manufactured piece than with any of his serious work since *videotape*. It's as if he had shrugged off a burden, self-imposed, that he had been aching to get rid of.

One other element helps *Out of Sight* tremendously: the editing. Soderbergh and Frank opted not to tell their story in strict chronological order. All of the so-called backstory, mostly the material before the Clooney-Lopez meeting, is interwoven as the film proceeds. This meant that they needed an exceptional editor. They got her.

Justice, please, for Anne V. Coates, too. She has gone without adequate attention for very much longer than Clooney. Born in England in 1925, she had wanted to get into film ever since she was a schoolgirl but had a tough time because of the prejudice against women. "I had an uncle who eventually helped me because he was doing religious films. He thought I was only getting into films for the glamour. He thought if he put me into religious films, it would take that away from me." (Quoted from *Selected Takes*, Vincent LoBrutto's collection of interviews with film editors.)

That uncle was J. Arthur Rank, who became a top figure in the British film industry. He was wrong about his niece; she went on to edit, at 22, her first feature, *The Pickwick Papers*. Other work soon followed, including two Alec Guinness films, *The Horse's Mouth* and *Tunes of Glory*. Then David Lean, who had himself begun his career as an editor, engaged her to edit *Lawrence of Arabia*.

To anyone who values that film as much as I do, the name of Anne V.

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Beyond Silence. *From Germany. A girl with normal hearing has two deaf parents. No tear-jerking, much sensitive acting and directing. (Reviewed 6/22/98)* **The Land Girls.** *During World War II, three English girls volunteer for farm work. Everything's romanticized, but it's pleasant. (7/13/98)* **Passion in the Desert.** *Balzac's tale of a soldier in the Sahara and his strange encounter with a (female) leopard. Oddly credible. Exquisitely made. (7/6/98)* **The Truman Show.** *A man's entire life, unknown to him, is on TV. The real secret captives, however, are us. Plot glitches, but very effective. (6/29/98)*—**SK**

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Coates is resplendent. (Remember, for just one instance, the cut from Peter O'Toole blowing out a match in a close-up to our first vast view of the desert.) Coates also had a hand in the latter-day restoration of *Lawrence.*

She moved to California in the 1980s and has worked on a long list of films, including *Ragtime.* Now this extraordinary 73-year-old woman has guided the time planes of *Out of Sight* with almost balletic flow and has handled straight-on scenes with finesse. Note, for example, the sequence in a cocktail lounge where Lopez deals with unwelcome attention.

The trouble with some clever premises, like the cop-and-robber match-up in this story, is that we keep wondering how the film is going to get the happy ending that it must have. Here that difficulty is dealt with by not dealing with it. The ending is ambiguous. The trouble with *that* is that neither of the possible alternatives is quite satisfactory, but at least we see neither.

Meanwhile, Clooney and Lopez and Frank and Soderbergh and Davis and (huzzah again!) Coates, lifted off by Elmore Leonard, have done something that is especially rare these days. (The film situation is, in fact, exactly the reverse of what is generally assumed.) Fairly often we get good serious films; what we don't get very often is good entertainment. Most of what is supposed to entertain is boring or strained or repellent. *Out of Sight* ingratiates. •

Robert Brustein on Theater

Still Searching for Theater

More than forty years ago, the critic Eric Bentley collected a group of his essays into a book called *In Search of Theatre.* It represented the fruit of his travels throughout Europe and Asia in pursuit of significant theatrical experiences. Today such an enterprise would seem to many people just a little quixotic. Except for a few jet-setters who make show trips to London, who boards a plane any more just to see a play? For that matter, how many still give a tinker's damn about the theater as an exploratory art? *Time* magazine, listing the hundred most influential artists and entertainers of the twentieth century, manages to remember Joyce and Eliot and Picasso but neglects to mention the name of a single dramatist, though the titles of a few plays make it into a sidebar. (Naturally, there's no lack of material about such immortals as Oprah and Coco Chanel and Johnny Carson.)

In our media-soaked culture, where art has been conflated with pop and nobody knows or cares much about the difference any more, a critic who continues to review serious drama sometimes feels that sitting in an aisle seat is equivalent to saddling Rocinante and riding toward the windmills. Has the fabulous invalid finally succumbed under the surgical knife of popular culture? My guess is that what's deader these days is the exercise of critical discrimination. In an atmosphere where a near-masterpiece like *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* can lose the Tony to a puff piece like *Art,* it's no wonder that *Time,* ignoring O'Neill and Brecht and Beckett, replaces the playwright with a category called "The Showmen," and crowns Rodgers and Hammerstein as the royals who "redefined the art form."

Those of you who have stopped going to plays will have to take my word for it that there is plenty of energy left in the theater these days, and it's not just illuminating Broadway klieg lights. Most people were disappointed by the recent visit of the Royal Shakespeare Company to BAM. I was disappointed, too, by the single production I managed to see, the fifteenth-century morality play **Everyman**. Transferred to what looked like an African village, the play was so colloquialized and multiculturalized that it should have been called *Everyperson.* Still, regardless of the limp production, it was refreshing to find the stage confronting such subjects as death and doomsday, and examining the values by which one's life on earth is measured.

During a recent visit to La Jolla, I got the chance to see a couple of things that proved the theater is still alive on the West Coast as well, one being a piece at the San Diego Rep called **Culture Clash in Bordertown**. "Culture Clash" is the name of a galvanic Chicano trio—Richard Montoyo, Ric Salinas, and Harold Siguenza—who together combine the talents of Lenny Bruce, the Marx Brothers,

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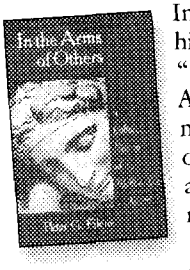

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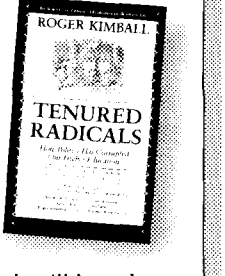

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Chaplin, and Cantinflas. The episodic evening is entirely preoccupied with local issues such as the status of Mexican immigrants in San Diego, a city that the trio provides with a rich comic history, from the time of its founding as a whites-only frontier town to its present status as a culturally diverse metropolis.

San Diego not only bears a Spanish name, it is only twenty minutes from the Mexican border. *Culture Clash* examines the confluence of the adjacent nationalities. The Mexican and the American flags engage first in a fencing match, then in a love match. The flags participate in a wedding ceremony, but the couple doesn't get along. A spellchecker on a projected computer screen continually changes the word "Chicano" to "chicanery." The proposed solution for this misalliance is to have San Diego merge with Tijuana. (The two cities actually dance together near the end.) *Culture Clash* is somewhat marred by excessive injustice-collecting, and it needs more ruthless editing. But the work displays a touching desire for community and a deep engagement with civic life—rare qualities in our fragmented world.

At the La Jolla Playhouse, Les Waters has staged a production of **Nora**, Ingmar Bergman's truncated version of *A Doll's House*. Bergman rendered down Ibsen's fiery tract about individual freedom into a domestic drama similar to his own *Scenes From a Marriage*. The adaptation makes for a tighter and better-constructed but less interesting play. Cut is Ibsen's preoccupation with heredity and environment, so crucial (since her father was also involved in forgery) to Nora's growing sense of her own culpability. And in a curious interpolation that may have been invented by the director, she abandons Torvald after letting him make love to her, leaving him naked in the bed.

Strongest in the cast are Bill Camp as a tortured and harrowed Krogstad and Gail Grate as a warmhearted Mrs. Linde. After a weak start, Kellie Overbey's Nora began to impress me, too, as the evening wore on, certainly more than Janet McTeer's neurasthenic rending of the role. Overbey has a sharp, piping voice which rises to a screech in her final, almost hysterical encounter with her husband. She hits him on the chest, screaming that she has had three children by a total stranger. (There may be a fourth coming following her recent nocturnal activities.) When she slams the door, the sound reverberates for a good two minutes. There are weaknesses in the acting and the script, but enough of Ibsen's play survives to make for a strong evening. And Annie Smart's costumes and red velvet set, decorated with the toys and the knickknacks of children whom we never see, are an eloquent statement in themselves.

Returning to New York, I dropped in to visit Arthur Miller's most recent work at the Signature, a theater that has been doing a season-long retrospective of his plays. The new one is called **Mr. Peters' Connection**, and it has been greeted with just about the worst reviews of Miller's career. One quickly sees why. It is windy, tiresome, self-conscious, and full of moony maundering. Miller is so eager to get things off his chest that he hasn't bothered to provide his new play with a plot, a form, or even much effort at characterization, though there's more than enough in the way of theme. *Mr. Peters' Connection* is like a long confession to a friend which has yet to be proofed or edited.

I'm probably getting soft in the head, but eventually I got to like this play despite its glaring faults. It is certainly an invaluable piece of biographical excavation, mining territory that Miller has uncovered before, but now with the sharper, more poignant shovels of old age. Old age, indeed, is the subject of the play, if the play can be said to have a subject—old age and its constant companion, nostalgia. As one character says, "Life is one to a customer and no returns."

To Harry Peters, a retired Pan Am pilot, the world is in its dotage. All his dogs are dead, he is older than anybody he knows, and he doubts if there is a government in the world "that hasn't been overthrown at least once since I was born." As played by Peter Falk, wearing squeaky shoes and rumpled clothes, with tousled hair, and using his patented New York bark, Peters is the very embodiment of fatigue, meditating on mortality like a garrulous ancient mariner being strangled by his albatross.

In an abandoned nightclub that was first a bank and then a library, decorated with the detritus of dead furniture and musical instruments (including the remains of a burnt piano), Peters comes upon ghosts from his past life—ghosts of people, ghosts of old pop tunes. He is looking for some continuity with his history in "the hope of finding a subject." It is like watching Arthur Miller at his typewriter wrestling with the same elusive goal.

Peters moans that no one can stay on the same subject for more than twenty seconds. "Could it be the constant changing of the subject," he asks, "that is wearing out our brains?" Sometimes, the "subject" proves to be the irrepressible greed of capitalist societies. Peters did some teaching on this theme ("the small impulses of large corporations") at Princeton. The earth is inhabited by defective people riddled with avarice, "and it is from their seed that we all descend." Greed is the Alpha and Omega. "The rest is gossip."

But Peters's real subject turns out to be the approach of death in the face of the longing for life. "When you've flown through hundreds of sunsets, you want them to go on for ever and ever. Hold back the darkness." The play eventually proves to be one long death scene. But Harry Peters is dying as an unbeliever: "God is precisely what is not there when you need him." For him there is neither immortality nor redemption.

In the course of this sterile spiritual journey, Mr. Peters encounters some characters familiar from his creator's past work. One of them is Cathy Mae (Kris Carr), who resembles Maggie in *After the Fall* and who, like her, is a stand-in for Miller's ex-wife Marilyn Monroe. She is a female apparition in a shift, who wears no bra or panties: "All her underwear has been sold, stolen, or given away." Mr. Peters is considerably more forgiving of Cathy Mae ("my poor golden wife") than Quentin was of Maggie. "Would it be a little less angry," he asks, "now that she has come into herself, and her fires are banked?" Cathy Mae reappears with a violent Italian husband (could he be modeled on Joe DiMaggio?), who knocks her around while she mournfully reminds Peters, "You were loved, Harry." After such abandonment, what forgiveness?

Peters has remarried a decorator named Charlotte (played by the redheaded Anne Jackson in a red suit and pillbox hat). And he has a brother, Calvin (Jeff Weiss), who fails to recognize or remember him, despite the fact that Peters prods his memory about fishing for bluefish and fluke in Sheepshead Bay. Peters is falling into oblivion with no human connections: "If you forget me, who the hell am I?... How terrible to go into the darkness alone." As a homeless black woman (Erica Bradshaw) rambles on upstage, Peters finally discovers the "subject." It is his love for his daughter, who begs him to stay.

Mr. Peters' Connection is easy enough to criticize. It is a string of abstractions when the truth is concrete. It ambles along without any significant form or coherent direction. And it sinks under the weight of a self-pitying portentousness, which Garry Hynes's static staging fails to transcend. Still, one has to respect the aging author's courage in baring his own lack of inspiration (momentary, let us hope) and his expectation of death. At 83, Arthur Miller still has the energy and the power to satisfy our search for theater well into the twenty-first century. •

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Jed Perl on Art

Seeing and Time

I.

Every couple of months, I hear an artist or an art historian announce, in a voice suggesting both amazement and frustration, that "nobody knows how to look anymore." They may be thinking of the nonplussed reactions of students whom they have taken to a museum, or of the smug theoretical pronouncements of colleagues, or of the anxious uncertainty with which friends who are not in the arts discuss the exhibitions that they see. These artists and art historians are not censorious so much as they are rattled. They merely believe that a lot of people are robbing themselves of a tremendous experience.

I know exactly how they feel, because there are many days when I go to the galleries in New York and find myself concluding that none of the people who are selecting and promoting contemporary art know how to look. I am sure that there is art being done that is worth a second and third look, but most of what is getting shown and talked about repels curiosity. I find myself going through whole buildings and streets and neighborhoods full of galleries that are operated and patronized by people who seem to care so little for seeing that they might as well have shut their eyes.

Confronted with this situation, my immediate reaction is that people have lost the ability to look. But the reality may be stranger still. I suspect that what I am encountering is not so much a generation that does not know how to look as a generation—a couple of generations, really—that has been trained to look in a particular way. If you make any effort to follow the way that art, especially contemporary art, is discussed in the art magazines, the museums, and the universities, you will find it difficult to avoid the impression that there is a method to this inattention.

People have the idea that to look at art in a sophisticated and up-to-date way means that you do not look at it very long or very hard. There are late modern and postmodern variations on this cursory approach. Some trace this back to Duchamp, others all the way back to Diderot. Whatever the genealogy (and it can get fairly complicated), the result is an almost universal feeling that art ought to be taken in quickly, instantaneously; that a painting or sculpture should hit you with a bang. After which, of course, you can talk or theorize about it forever.

Let's be absolutely clear about what kind of visual experience has been, if not yet lost, then marginalized. What people are no longer prepared for is seeing as an experience that takes place in time. They have ceased to believe that a painting or sculpture is a structure with a meaning that unfolds as we look. This endangered experience is not a matter of imagining a narrative; it involves, rather, the more fundamental activity of relating part to part. We need to see particular elements, and see that they add up in ways that become more complex—and sometimes simpler—as we look and look some more.

The essential aspect of all the art that I admire the most, old and new, is that it makes me want to keep looking. A painting or a sculpture—by Sassetta, by Corot, by Brancusi—engages the viewer by means of a range of particularities and unities. We take in these elements and combinations of elements in different ways, at different speeds. Sometimes we take them in serially, sometimes as overlapping impressions, sometimes simultaneously. We may approach the same element—a figure, a curve—from different directions. A work of art can reveal alternate, even in some ways contradictory, kinds of logic. And logic can collapse into illogic, from which a new logic can emerge.

Of course the artist exerts considerable control; but the greatest artists enable us to make our own way through a composition, so that we find our own kind of freedom within the artist's sense of order. If I were asked to name one group of paintings from the past fifty years that epitomizes the shaped yet boundless experience that I am attempting to describe, I would point to Braque's Studio paintings, those symphonic celebrations of the particularity of seeing, of the insistence on unity as a delicious, forever-just-beyond-our-grasp dream.

If there is so much to be said for particularity and paradox, why has the unity idea triumphed so totally? The first thought that comes to mind is that this decline is not really so strange, considering that we live in a world in which art marketing dominates art, and where the work that reveals its meaning instantaneously is probably going to be the easiest to sell. I mean sell in the broadest sense: not just to collectors, but also to curators and museumgoers and critics. There are kinds of work, such as Conceptual Art, that by definition defy extended looking (while inviting extended cogitation).

Those who have never much cared for theory may wish to argue that, with theory ascendant, there is simply less and less time left to look. But I would point out that the ideal of immediate, all-in-one impact has become a touchstone even for people who by and large reject theory. In 1982, when Peter Schjeldahl wanted to praise David Salle's canvases, which were then at the forefront of a fashionable return to painting, he described Salle as "an artist who evokes virtual Rorschach readings of critics' pet tendencies." What could provoke a quicker reaction than a Rorschach test? And just this spring Dave Hickey—a critic who, like Schjeldahl, has a reputation as a postmodern aesthete—saluted some new paintings by Ellsworth Kelly (in a catalogue for the Matthew Marks Gallery) as "an irrevocable fait accompli." Hickey hastened to add that this "demands narrative," but his protracted "accounting of the contexts and processes" belongs not to seeing but to thinking about seeing, which is something else.

Seeing is not easy to talk about, because the talk can easily shift attention away from the primary experience, which is essentially nonverbal. You can talk yourself into distinctions where none exist, and you can end up confusing talking about seeing with seeing. As I recently made my way through a number of books that deal with how art has been seen and understood in the past fifty years, it occurred to me that large areas of agreement among leading art theorists and art historians are often masked by all the arguments that have been waged between the Greenberg-type formalists, the advocates of French-style theory, and several other varieties of late moderns and postmoderns.

I am aware that there are substantial matters of philosophy, taste, and outlook that separate Clement Greenberg, who died in 1994 at the age of 85 and is now the subject of *Clement Greenberg: A Life* (Scribner) by Florence Rubenfeld; and Michael Fried, who was much influenced by Greenberg in the '60s when he wrote an influential series of essays which he has finally made into a book

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called *Art and Objecthood* (University of Chicago Press); and Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind E. Krauss, whose book *Formless: A User's Guide* (Zone Books) is a leading example of the French-style theory for which Fried does not care. But I would argue that they are all inclined—together with a poststructuralist such as Norman Bryson and a postmodern aesthete such as Dave Hickey—to use their eyes in the same way. The people who are now regarded as the most sophisticated interpreters of art are instinctively disposed to believe that a great work of art is a work that they see totally at once, and this belief is grounded in such a preanalytical mix of old-line academic, antiformal Dada, and postwar high modern assumptions that even the finest minds cannot escape from what amounts to a visual prejudice.

This phenomenon is complicated by the fact that immediate impact and seamless unity are legitimate and recognizable values in art. But the immediacy and the unity that now dominate taste are shallow. The new unity has neither weight nor force; you feel no struggle, no resolution. And there is no surprise lurking in the immediacy of a lot of recent art. Nothing mysterious or submerged is being brought forth—in the way, say, that the near-symmetry of Mark Rothko's paintings can be exciting because (as David Smith said about his own work) "the afterimages of parts lie back on the horizon, very distant cousins to the image formed by the finished work." When, thirty years ago, Michael Fried praised paintings and sculptures for their "*instantaneousness*" and "*presentness*," the italics helped to convey the electric-shock quality that he was after. By now, however, unity and immediacy have become uninflected, tyrannical experiences that rob art of all its ambiguous fascination.

In offering a response to the big-bang theory of seeing, I cannot enter an ongoing dialogue, because those of us who believe that seeing-through-time is simply how art always was, is, and will be experienced have by and large been shut out of the discussion. What I can offer is an alternative view, a view that is grounded, I believe, in the very beginnings of modern art, as well as in earlier traditions.

Much more than a theoretical argument is at stake. The experts who so insistently deny the temporal dimension of art have brought us to a point where contemporary art that requires concentrated, adventuresome attention—whether the work is representational or abstract or somewhere in between—is regularly shunted to the side, if not eclipsed. If there has been one sure rule in recent years it is this: the more that an artist asks us to look at a work over a period of time, the more a work drops beneath the radar screens that criticism has set up to track the contemporary scene. With the result that, if you are looking for an all-in-one impact, you are missing most of the important painting and sculpture that is being done today.

Courtesy of the Musée du Louvre

CHARDIN, *THE BRIOCHE*, 1763

II.

Just to make sure that there is no confusion about the kind of experience that I am defending, let's consider what happens when we look at a transcendently great work of art. The painting I have in mind is a still life by Chardin, *The Brioche*, from 1763, in the Louvre. It is a very small painting—just over a foot and a half high and just under two feet wide—and so you might expect to be able to take it in all at once. But when I first look at *The Brioche*, it is Chardin's way of differentiating one substance from another that holds me; and so I linger over his distinctions.

Chardin gives us the exact character of cherries and peaches, of biscuits and a crusty brioche, of porcelain and glass. And even as this naturalistic virtuosity is astonishing me, I am also noticing (as people have noticed since the artist's day) Chardin's habit of playing a hide-and-seek game with his own peerless illusionism by enriching his surfaces with strokes of strong, virtually unmixed color. I begin to be caught up in the poetic mood that Chardin spins, as he turns our attention back and forth, between paint-as-paint and paint-as-illusion, between paint-as-illusion and paint-as-paint.

Initially, I am not especially caught up in the totality of Chardin's composition, though I am aware of the overall—and on first glance, not especially daring—symmetry, which fans out from the grand spiral of the brioche that is topped with a sprig of orange blossom. There is something pleasing about the simplicity of the arrangement, about the way Chardin draws me into an almost childlike game of counting things. I notice that there are three cherries and three biscuits, but only two peaches. And the painting only really begins to pull me in when I find myself studying those three cherries to the exclusion of everything else.

Damned if Chardin hasn't turned these cherries into a sort of reeling circle dance, with their curled stems creating a mesmerizing red-and-green whirlpool. That tiny cyclone might be the engine that powers the whole composition. The force of those cherries is certainly out of all proportion to the space that they occupy, but then this is a painting full of strange, almost Manhattan-skyline-like shifts in scale. So now I may have found the key that unlocks *The Brioche*. I want to compare objects in the extreme foreground, such as the cherries, with forms that tower over them, such as the glass carafe full of liquor and, of course, the brioche.

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I find myself making lots of comparisons. I notice that the whirlpool of the cherries is echoed, in a slowed-down version, by the spiral of the brioche. Soon I am observing that the handle of the Meissen bowl points deep, deep into space. And if I connect that imaginary trajectory with another imaginary trajectory, suggested by the angle of one of the biscuits, I find them converging to create a triangle, which is "behind" the brioche. Chardin's symmetries are beginning to be interestingly echoed and reiterated. The still life is becoming landscape-like. I can think of the brioche as a sort of Mont Sainte-Victoire—surmounted by a flower-tree, that is, the orange blossoms—which I move away from and return to by several different paths.

By now I feel the multiplying complexity of Chardin's compositional architecture: the curves and the curls of brioche, cherries, peaches, and patterned bowl, all set in an inexhaustible counterpoint with the relative rectilinearity of the liquor carafe, the shelf, the biscuits. Chardin uses his lyrically there-but-not-quite-there handling of paint to interweave episodes of intense hue, earth-toned shadings, and diffused, grayish atmosphere. And of course I am also considering the peculiarities of this particular gathering of objects—the Meissen bowl without an accompanying coffee or tea service; the elegant liquor bottle next to the biscuits that haven't even been set on a plate. The painting is about differentness and connectedness, and the relationships are so thrillingly elaborated that you never want the complications to come to a conclusion.

A picture by Chardin is a dream of unity that we glimpse through an atmosphere saturated in particularities, and it is our feeling for those particularities, and for their connectedness, that carries us into the dream. I believe that the same can be said for many, if not all, of the greatest works of art. In the museum and in the gallery, I want the parts to add up—and to multiply—in unexpected ways. This is the process that gives art its rhythm, its flow, its mesmerizing time element.

This is certainly what holds us in Analytical Cubist paintings, those anatomical blueprints for the art of our century, which often seem composed of the bones and the sinews of Chardin's still lifes. In one of the great Picassos or Braques of 1911 or 1912, we will pick out a naturalistic detail (a bit of rope or wood, say) set next to a line that is suspended in thin air. We see shapes that are apparently solid at one end and fade off into nothingness a few inches farther

ART SCENES *Galleries, Exhibits, and Events*

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Robert Klein Gallery 38 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02111, 617-267-7997. Tuesday through Saturday, 10- 5:30. *Northwest Passage: The Photographs of Robert Glenn Ketchum*, July 15 - August 8, 1998. This exhibit is a spectacular overview of the Arctic landscape created during a private boat crossing of the Northwest Passage from Alaska to Greenland. Ketchum and his Master Printer, Michael Wilder, are considered some of the finest printmakers in color photography, and this mid-career exhibit of nearly 60 prints is the culmination of their extraordinary 25-year working relationship. Also published as an Aperture book of the same title.

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on. In Braque's *Homage to Bach*, words, a musical instrument, and echoes of classical architecture play a fascinating hide-and-seek with one another, and we follow the clues.

In his "Creative Credo" (1920), a classic text of modern art, Paul Klee observes that "space itself is a temporal concept." Klee focuses on the narrative possibilities of Cubist construction, and in doing so he insists on the indissoluble connection between modern structures and earlier European art. He asks whether a viewer can—or should—"finish with a work all at once." And his response—a response that he would almost certainly have given to many contemporary critics—is: "Often yes, unfortunately." Klee goes on to say that a painting is "first of all genesis." "In the work of art, paths are laid out for the beholder's eye." These paths create movement, an opening-up sensation.

The same idea is reframed, a generation later, in the writings of Hans Hofmann, the great teacher among the Abstract Expressionists. He argues that "movement is the expression of life. All movements are of a spatial nature. The continuation of movement through space is rhythmic." Hofmann also celebrates immediacy, but he wants the immediate sensation to pull the viewer into an experience that expands as we look and look some more. And if you are susceptible to the rhythmic impulse that fuels those movements, you will find that many of the conflicts between form and content that have preoccupied the theorists for decades and even generations begin to vanish.

If there is time to look, in other words, if there is patience for perception, then there is no conflict between noticing the character of a smile in a portrait one moment, the way the tones of flesh vibrate against the distant landscape a little later, and the cut of the sitter's clothes later still. What people tend to divide into form and content is woven together into the rhythmic movement of a visual experience.

III.

Why has this expansive way of looking, which is lodged so deep in our experience, been rejected? And why has it often been said to be anything but modern? Familiarity is no doubt an element here: taste is inevitably conditioned by the work that people know best, and for years a great deal of the painting and sculpture that has been most prominently displayed has not exactly encouraged anybody to look long or hard. No matter what one's particular feelings about the work of Duchamp, Pollock, Judd, Warhol, and Stella happen to be—and these are artists of radically different characters and values—we can probably agree that the audience that has grown up regarding this as standard fare is going to believe that they should take in art quickly, instantaneously, all at once. And many people would argue that this speed-reading fits right in with the pace of contemporary life.

The hankering for a swift unity may be grounded in a belief that today's artists must create products that can compete in an environment in which it sometimes seems that there is nothing but brand-identity left. Many are convinced that the modern world, with its acceleration, commercialization, and cultural homogeneity, is always hostile to particularity and to idiosyncrasy. In some quarters of the art scene it is now assumed that no artist, no matter how gifted, can any longer hope to establish a detailed, particular, extended relationship with anybody in the audience.

These ideas, of course, are not new. You can trace them back to the go-go mood of the postwar years, when a hip triumphalism became the upscale mood in New York City, and it didn't take any particular intelligence to see Color Field painting and Pop Art and Minimal Art as corollaries of a slam-right-through way of life.

I think I know why Clement Greenberg's ideas held such a fascination for many, especially in the early '60s. By arguing that artists, at least since the Renaissance, have sought a seamless, peremptory impact, he gave the sleekly upbeat painting of his own day a sophisticated traditionalist sheen. Greenberg was without a doubt the most searching exponent of the idea that we take in great art all at once; and if we are to judge by the tone of mixed bewilderment, anger, and awe that marked many reviews of Rubenfeld's workmanlike biography, even now nobody quite knows what to make of him. There are a number of reasons for this ambivalence. Greenberg had a flair for playing the art-world game that is rare in a man of his refined intelligence, and he convinced many people who should have known better that taste was a marketable commodity. In the process he was not averse to steamrolling anybody who did not get with the program; and those people have not always been quiet, nor should they be.

What ultimately makes Greenberg such an enduringly ambiguous figure is his achievement as a writer. Even when we are feeling skeptical about his ideas, we can be drawn along by the force of his grandly plainspoken prose style. Of all the critics who flourished in those years—I am thinking not only of an art critic such as Harold Rosenberg, but also of literary critics such as Philip Rahv and Lionel Trilling—Greenberg is without a doubt the greatest prose stylist. He knew how to use his blunt lucidity to put over his big idea. He was convinced that twentieth-century art was moving toward its own kind of bluntness—toward a way of treating "the whole of the surface as a single undifferentiated field of interest [which in turn] compels us to feel and judge the picture more immediately in terms of its over-all unity."

There is no question that Greenberg's ideas are grounded in the artistic excitement of his early manhood, when a new kind of stripped-down abstraction was the hot news in New York. I suspect that what happened to Greenberg was that after a while he began to want to make that part of the truth into the whole truth; he wanted to line up the whole history of art behind the Pollocks that he adored. By the early '60s, he had turned "instantaneous unity" into his key to all mythologies. When he announces that it was the fifteenth-century Italian painters who discovered "that instantaneous, compact and monumental unity ... to which Western pictorial taste has oriented itself ever since," I have to wonder if this isn't closer to a description of a billboard than of a Masaccio.

It would be absurd to argue that Greenberg's opinions are directly affecting the taste of gallerygoers and museumgoers today. The contemporary audience has only the vaguest familiarity with his opinions. By the same token, Duchamp's ideas (to the extent that one can determine what they are) remain the purview of specialists; and the same goes for the ideas of such contemporary writers as Michael Fried, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois, and Norman Bryson. But I do believe that the sophisticated public is picking up on fragments—inevitably popularized and frequently corrupted—of all of these thinkers' ideas; and by now there is a kind of theoretical gestalt that hangs heavy in the art-world air.

Everybody from the formalists and the Neo-Dadaists through the poststructuralists and the academic Marxists seems to believe that, for the last hundred years, the artist and the public have become increasingly alienated from one another. This process is felt to have a historical inevitability, which in turn leads people to imagine that the kind of controlled journey that the artist might once have provoked in the viewer is now an impossibility. It is this situation that led Duchamp, in a famous statement made in Houston in 1957, to say that "to all appearances, the artist acts like a

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mediumistic being." For Greenberg, the result was an increasingly self-critical and inward-turning artist. I do not mean to imply that the aesthetics of Duchamp and the aesthetics of Greenberg are the same, but their divergent ideals both culminate in the notion that the artist cannot any longer count on communicating complicated, expansive experiences in a detailed, lucidly articulated way.

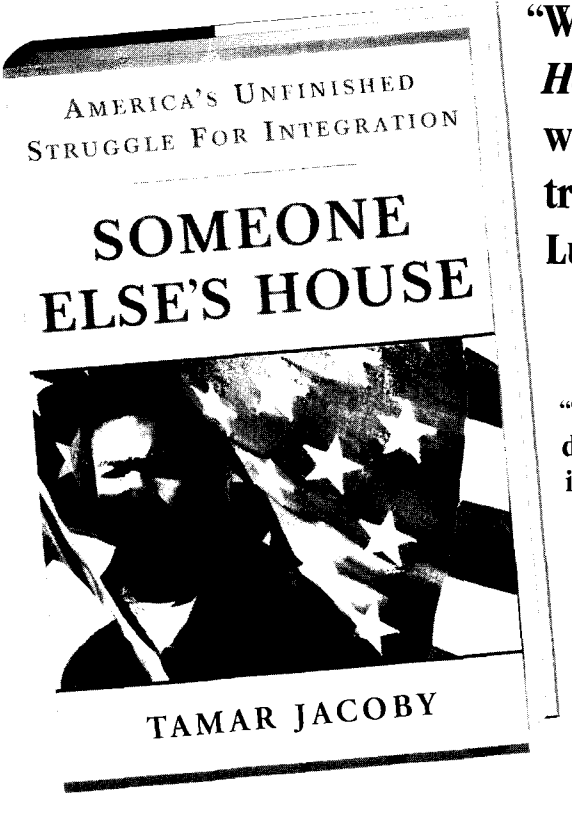
In a scathing attack on Greenberg that was published at the time of the Museum of Modern Art's "High and Low" show in 1990, Robert Storr, the curator at the Modern, couldn't avoid remarking upon a convergence of formalism and Dadaism. If the essence of Greenberg's view was the self-critical nature of modern art, Storr argued, then "junk assemblagists, Neo-Dadaists, and Pop artists" are continuing that process, since they "used the castoffs of mass culture to criticize that culture from within."

Self-criticism is at the heart of the unity idea: you keep whittling things away. The new unity is really a new simplicity. The logic of Storr's argument may be a bit difficult to follow, but I think it comes down to the very rudimentary thought that a Johns *Flag* or a Warhol *Marilyn* is a distillation of the pop ethos, and as such is analogous to a Morris Louis stain painting, which (at least for Greenberg) is a distillation of the Western color tradition. The aim of art is distillation. The contemporary is the unitary.

Many people have made this connection. As early as the '40s, and frequently since the '60s, critics have observed, with varying degrees of comfort or distress, that the absoluteness with which Dada rejected all traditional ideas of composition and structure could seem to be leading in the same direction as purist art of one kind or another. Even Michael Fried—in "Three American Painters," the introduction to a 1965 show of work by Noland, Olitski, and Stella, the abstract artists he admired and wanted to isolate from what he called the literalism of Minimal Art—had to admit that "just as modernist painting has enabled one to see a blank canvas, a sequence of random spatters, or a length of colored fabric as a picture, Dada and Neo-Dada have equipped one to treat virtually any object as a work of art." Both, in other words, were all-in-one, unnuanced experiences. By the end of the '60s, all the art that the tastemakers believed was any longer worth talking about, whether in praise or blame, was big-bang art.

The unity idea is by now so widely accepted as to defy analysis. Marxists like Warhol for the same reason that the auctioneers at Sotheby's do: he makes a big, fast impact. And if you are a historian, you may want to wend your way back from Warhol's gay all-overness to Pollock's macho all-overness. At least that is what Rosalind Krauss has done, in *Formless*, when she considers Warhol's oxidation paintings, the big metallic surfaces on which he had friends urinate in order to get the paint to change color. "Warhol's 'urinary' reading of Pollock's mark," she explains, "was insisting that the verticality of the phallic dimension was itself being riven from within to rotate into the axis of a homoerotic challenge." The urinary, the unitary. Krauss uses her newfangled theory like camouflage, but if you peel it off you find that her eye is still seeking the all-in-one experience that she learned from Greenberg years ago.

In the '70s, Michael Fried turned from art criticism to art history, and began to study the Salon painting of late anti-Rococo France in the eighteenth century. (Maybe it wasn't such a reach after Color Field, which was the salon painting of the '60s.) Fried believed that he had found, in Diderot's defense of the narrative paintings of Greuze, another critic who saw "the essence of painting in terms of instantaneousness." Fried became immersed in old-guard mainstream French art theory, which insisted on a unity of time in classical history painting. Never mind that some



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of Poussin's most evocative masterpieces were temporally elastic and ambiguous.

It sometimes seems that contemporary theorists such as Michael Fried and Norman Bryson are determined to repeal the elements of paradox and ambiguity that are right there before our eyes in the Old Masters. In his influential *Vision and Painting* (1983), Bryson observes that what Titian—and Vermeer—create is "a single moment of presence. For the painter, the irregular and unfolding discoveries of the glance are collected and fused into a single surface whose every square inch is in focus." This is a description that jibes with no experience that I have ever had with a Titian or a Vermeer.

Fried is a discerning thinker; he is troubled enough by the idea of instantaneousness to argue that looking can be extended, just so long as "at every moment the *claim* on the viewer of the modernist painting or sculpture is renewed totally." And Bryson is in fact opposed to the monolithic vision of painting—the Tyranny of the Gaze—which he would like to reject in favor of the freedom of the Glance. Krauss, too, in the discussion of Cubist collage in her new book *The Picasso Papers* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), may be understood as reinventing an idea of seeing-through-time that is really the most natural thing in the world. But these historians are not necessarily in control of the ideas that they purvey. And because they are inclined to believe that they are close to the mainstream of taste, which for that very reason they regard as never far from the truth, they have a way of ending up in cahoots with some of the big-time museum and gallery people who stuff the latest version of instant unity down our throats.

When Fried managed to demonstrate, at least to some people's satisfaction, that the campy melodramatics of Greuze's paintings were protomodernist, he performed a great service for the postmodernists, and it hardly matters whether he planned this or not. If Greuze's overcrowded narratives lead us to Manet, then why can't that road just keep on going all the way to the get-it-in-an-instant Cibachrome surfaces of Cindy Sherman's pomo Greuzian allegories? As for Bryson, he has made it possible to see Greenberg's celebration of instantaneous unity as a sinister ideological plot, and what could be more politically postmodern than that? Unity becomes the white male artist's way of not letting the viewers make up their own minds. What is lost, once again, is the idea of looking as an extended, responsive, evolving, back-and-forth interaction.

IV.

There is no mystery as to why unity exerts such a pull. We go to art for clarity. When you talk about a painting or sculpture, you say, "Now it's all coming together for me," or "I see how it adds up." We all hope for coherence. But there are many ways for a work to come together. The character of even the most seamlessly convincing painting or sculpture is to be found in the unique confluence of elements and forces that makes up the whole.

This is the important point that was made in 1966 by Meyer Schapiro, in the essay "On Perfection, Coherence, and Unity of Form and Content." In that understated way of his, Schapiro chose not to place his remarks in a contemporary context, but I do not think that it was an accident that the essay appeared in the mid-'60s, when Greenberg's doctrine of instantaneous unity was at its most influential. Surely Schapiro is lodging a protest against the whole drift of '60s aesthetics when he writes that "to see the work as it is one must be able to shift one's attitude in passing from part to part, from one aspect to another, and to enrich the whole progressively in successive perceptions."

Like Greenberg, Schapiro had been fascinated by the move toward all-in-one expression in the paintings of the Abstract Expressionists. But he nevertheless insists that wholeness is at best an elusive thing. Schapiro shrewdly points out that we sometimes experience paintings that are in a fragmentary state as magnificent wholes. He insists that certain kinds of incompleteness or irresolution can be precisely the elements that give a work its life-giving energy. He bids us remember that there are many, many different ways in which a work of art can satisfy us; and that in order to arrive at this sense of satisfaction, we may find ourselves approaching a work in a number of radically different ways.

Schapiro does not ask why this kind of peremptory unity might have become such an obsession in the '60s. He could well have pointed out that the idea of unity—if not the unity of perception, then the unity of action in a painting—had been a theme among the authors of treatises on aesthetics since the Renaissance. Certainly, fundamentalist theories of totality always tend to come to the fore when the general conversation about art has lost its vital connection with the hands-on experience of the studio. Such was the case in the late 1950s, when many artists in New York feared that American art's age of experimentation was moving toward academicism; and this only became truer as Pop and Minimalism gave way to Conceptual Art and Environmental Art and then to Postmodernism.

Perhaps the most recent form that unity in art has taken is an obsessive narrative busyness, an image so saturated with small, frequently cartoonish elements that although they present an idea of variety, they are visually impenetrable—a kind of pomo anti-unity unity. A leading proponent of this approach is Lari Pittman, the painter whose labyrinthine pop extravaganzas have been featured in the past three Whitney Biennials. From the '60s down to our day, fewer and fewer mainstream artists have been committed to the kind of pragmatic studio practice that acts as a brake on theorists who associate excellence with one or another form of monolithic unity.

Anybody who is seeking a counter-tradition in recent decades will want to read the extraordinarily intelligent criticism that the painter Fairfield Porter wrote in the '60s. Porter was always unequivocally dedicated to paradox, particularity, and the ambiguities of looking, and he frequently grappled with the difficult question of why taste was veering in such a different direction. Time and again, Porter came to the conclusion that the mysterious process of looking at a work of art was in some fundamental way at odds with the push toward standardization that has characterized modern times.

"Standardization," Porter wrote in 1966, "is the victory of the most probable; art is for the improbable and against the standard." In a 1969 essay on "Art and Scientific Method," he observed that "with the arbitrary and the particular, there can be no 'logical' communication at all, for the arbitrariness of the original experience will not survive a generalization that is necessary for logical communication." If Porter is correct, this may explain why the quickie-unity of late modern and postmodern art has been such a success among corporate collectors. What, after all, would captains of industry make of the art that Porter preferred—an art whose aim, as Porter said, quoting Wallace Stevens, was "without imposing, without reasoning at all, to find the eccentric at the base of design"?

I do not mean to suggest that corporate standardization is the same thing as the unity that Greenberg celebrated, or that the unity which Greenberg saw in the masterpieces of the past is the same thing as the inscrutable self-sufficiency of the found object. But I do believe that in the minds of the majority of contemporary tastemakers all of this is related. And I cannot avoid the conclusion that a

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concept of unity that is as old as art theory itself has now been resurrected in a pernicious form, a form that perfectly fits the art world's dizzy, no-time-to-wait globalized vision. The people who make contemporary taste are inclined to believe that if a painter or sculptor pulls them in gradually, incrementally, the artist is probably not really doing much at all. Anyway, they have another appointment.

Even a lively, unstuffy writer such as Dave Hickey, the columnist for *Art issues*, the hip Los Angeles magazine, seems so pessimistic about finding his preferred kind of quirky beauty in a painting or a sculpture that he ends up filling his essays with comments on anything but art. Hickey ranges from the Las Vegas show of Siegfried and Roy to old TV programs such as *Perry Mason* and his feelings while he "sat shivah for Chet Baker." I read Hickey's voice of unnervingly sweet sanity as a particularly clever and seductive response to the art world's closed-down horizons.

Is there any wonder that art professionals who have lost—or systematically denied themselves—the capacity to see should now talk in a way that is fancifully vague or theatrically overelaborated? Having convinced themselves that they have nothing much to look at, how could the people who are most involved with contemporary painting and sculpture not be in a state of perplexity—even of downright self-disgust? How could they not feel querulous and belligerent? And if the professionals feel like this, how can we expect the wider audience that goes to galleries and museums to believe that your imagination opens up as the work unfolds in time?

What is so demoralizing about the situation in which we now find ourselves is that the very painters and sculptors who offer us works of art with complicated, multiple points of entry are often rejected as presenting poorly organized, incoherent experiences. Artists who actually succeed in communicating with the audience are now generally the first ones to be dismissed as messy, as emoters—as vulgarians. That may be how many people regard Joan Snyder, one of the very best painters we have. While the steady stream of visitors to her show this spring at Hirschl and Adler Modern demonstrated that there is still an audience that knows how to look long and hard, I had to wonder that a work as extraordinary as *A Sad Story Told by an Optimist*, the centerpiece of this show, was passed over by the official art world as a nonevent.

This is a painting in which Snyder rages against order and unity. It is a huge sixteen-plus-feet-wide canvas, full of structures that are shattered and reconstructed, just barely, before our eyes. This gorgeous three-part invention, with its overall orchestration of lemony greens and cadmium-alizarin-and-pinkish reds, offered an experience so complicated, in so many parts and passages, that a visitor couldn't take control of it; you just had to go with it and see what happened.

In the beginning, at the far left of the painting, Snyder is literally tearing things up, as she unglues a corner of a collaged square. The viewer is taken through a series of metamorphoses in this painting, from the dream of absoluteness that is a grid of colored squares, through a chaotic landscape scattered with skull-like masks, and finally into a flowering field. In the center, Snyder punches a hole in the canvas, and pulls us down into a slit filled with dark, crushed fabric. There is so much to see. You do not see it all at once.

Much of the power of the painting is in the way that you go through changes with Snyder, and find things out in time. Only after a while did I notice, at the extreme lower right, in the midst of all her glorious orchestrations, this shocker: a black handprint and the crudely scrawled word "MOM." Here Snyder is brazenly emotional. I would not have thought that an artist could get away with giving an elegy for a dead parent this crude immediacy; but it works, because you discover the weight of Snyder's cry for her mother as an undercurrent, like the soprano's last, low moan at the end of a grand aria.

Snyder is an artist who wants to communicate on multiple levels. She goes into the whole question of remembering a person and remembering their suffering and their death. She is in search of lost time. And since she believes in the temporal element in painting, she finds it. But will a public that for decades has been encouraged to swallow art in a single gulp find the time to look at a painting until it begins to reveal its secrets?

To the extent that contemporary artists can make people look longer and harder, they must dare to give their work a complicated openness, a surprising particularity. For when people come to understand that within a painting or a sculpture they can find a time that is outside of time, they will want to keep looking. Only then will they see that while nothing in a painting moves—at least in the sense that sound moves in music or bodies move in dance—everything in a painting is alive.

And then the surface opens up, and effects multiply, and you see more and more. You enter into an intimate imaginative collaboration with the artist. If the very idea of instantaneous unity comes out of a feeling that in the world things can happen with this much speed, a more circuitous and layered way of looking suggests a release from the compressed, fast-forward pace of daily life, which has always troubled people, and surely does today. If you can unlock a moment, you can enter a realm of freedom. Artists show us the way. To look long is to feel free. •

Devil in a Blue Dress

BY ALAN TAYLOR

The Lord Cornbury Scandal: The Politics of Reputation in British America by Patricia U. Bonomi

(University of North Carolina Press, 290 pp., $29.95)

We begin with a mysterious painting, an eighteenth-century portrait, apparently of a wealthy but dour middle-aged woman wearing a lovely blue dress. But the label affixed to the portrait identifies the subject as Edward Hyde, Viscount Cornbury (1661-1723), the royal governor of colonial New York and New Jersey from 1702 to 1708. Conspicuously hung in the New-York Historical Society, the painting seems to confirm the scandalous rumors that the mandarin was a transvestite, who routinely displayed himself in public in women's clothing.

Historians used to uphold prim morals, and so they were quick to accept the charge of transvestism. It seemed of a piece with better documented evidence of Cornbury's arrogance, greed, corruption, and mismanagement. Historians have generally declared Cornbury to have been one of the most terrible governors that Britain ever imposed on an American colony. Given our common

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assumption that royal governors in general were corrupt bullies who eventually helped to drive the colonists to revolt, the very worst of such a bad lot must have been a consummate rogue indeed.

And no accusation would be too bad to believe of Lord Cornbury. One historian dismissed Cornbury in 1935 as a "degenerate and pervert who is said to have spent half of his time dressed in women's clothes." In 1976, *American Heritage* published a scathing account of Cornbury entitled "His Most Detestable High Mightiness"; and its author's denunciation culminated in an insistence that His Lordship routinely dressed as a woman and delighted in "lurking behind trees to pounce, shrieking with laughter, on his victims."

Lives of royal governors in colonial America rarely provoke much interest, but the Cornbury scandal, and especially the Cornbury painting, promises a broader audience for Patricia Bonomi's intriguing and carefully crafted book. Instead of writing a conventional biography, Bonomi has framed her narrative with the charges against Cornbury, for the purpose of shaping a sustained historical brief for his defense. She dwells especially on the most lurid charge against Cornbury: that he displayed himself in public in women's clothing. Between 1702 and 1708, the most weighty charges against Cornbury were bullying and corruption; and his enemies threw in the cross-dressing accusation as an afterthought, as a damning bit of color to clinch their case that he was bad to the bone. Bonomi attends to the weightiest charges, but she devotes more print to the alleged transvestism, since that is what renders Cornbury so very distinctive.

It seems almost ungrateful that she debunks the painting and the rest of the Cornbury legend as fictions manufactured by his political enemies to undermine a good man and an upstanding governor. Still, readers will forgive her, for she is a judicious and resourceful historian who relentlessly pursues, and scrupulously assesses, the scraps of evidence. It is hard to give up on a story or a painting so deliciously scandalous, but Bonomi provides a consolation with an intriguing detective story that exposes the weaknesses in the case against Lord Cornbury. In the process, she casts light upon the operation of political power in the past and the nature of history writing in the present.

Bonomi examines Cornbury's aristocratic youth and family connections in England in the hope of establishing a sort of innocence by association. She suggests that he was too well-connected to the conservative, the powerful, and the well-born to have gambled his precious reputation on public peculation and a silk dress. His grandfather was the first Earl of Clarendon and the Lord High Chancellor, second only to the King in English power during the early 1660s. His aunt Anne married the King's brother, the Duke of York, who inherited the throne in 1685 and reigned as James II until he was overthrown in 1688 by a coup known by the victors as "the Glorious Revolution." The Hydes weathered the political storm because the young Lord Cornbury had become an army colonel with an exquisite sense of timing: by shifting his loyalty at the opportune moment he assured the military triumph of the new monarchs, King William and Queen Mary. It helped his transition that Aunt Anne was long dead and that her daughter was the new Queen Mary and therefore Cornbury's first cousin. Betrayal of an uncle by a former marriage was easier because it benefited a cousin by blood. When Queen Mary and King William died childless, her sister Anne inherited the throne, reigning from 1702 to 1714.

Drawing upon the patronage of his regal and female cousins, Lord Cornbury escaped from his increasingly insistent English creditors to the distant but profitable posting as governor of New York and New Jersey, on the American margins of the empire. Although it proved to be financially disappointing and politically contentious, Cornbury's stint as governor did not dismay his sovereign, who rewarded him with promotions and a £2,000 pension after his return home in 1710. Queen Anne appointed him to her Privy Council and to the Board of Admiralty, the two preeminent institutions of British imperial rule. Bonomi argues that the Queen would never have so honored Cornbury if there had been any substance to the sensational charges against him as a royal governor in the colonies.

His dual governorship had been an especially challenging post, perhaps the most difficult in the empire. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the empire's managers needed to rationalize and to regularize colonial administration, in hopes of mobilizing more resources to build a larger army and navy—the better to prosecute Britain's escalating warfare with the powerful French empire. As a result, Cornbury demanded more in taxes and in militia service from the colonists than had his relatively lax predecessors. Moreover, New York was a strategic place, located astride the Hudson valley, the corridor of invasion between the British colonies along the Atlantic seaboard and their enemies, the French colonists and their Indian allies in Canada. Consequently, Cornbury faced all the difficulties and the costs of organizing the defense of an especially vulnerable and important colony.

To add to his difficulties, New York was also virtually bankrupt. It had been sorely reduced by the high costs of its defense, his predecessors' mismanagement of the colonial treasury, and the parsimony of the provincial assembly, whose members were so adept at currying popularity by minimizing taxes. Their constituents were farmers and artisans who cared less about the empire than about their own pockets.

Those same politicians in New York were also bitterly divided over the local legacy of "the Glorious Revolution." The Dutch-speaking majority resented the English-speaking minority that dominated the colony after its conquest in 1664. In 1689, a champion of the majority, an ambitious merchant and militia captain named Jacob Leisler, had exploited the political turmoil in England to seize power in New York, declaring himself the acting governor, and infuriating the Anglophile party. They got their revenge in 1691 by securing Leisler's arrest, trial, conviction, and execution for treason.

For the next decade, New York's politicians were bitterly split into Leislerian and Anti-Leislerian factions. Every new royal governor had to pick one side to reward and another side to punish. Since Cornbury's immediate predecessor, the Earl of Bellomont, had favored the Leislerians, the Anti-Leislerians expected that the new governor would swing their way. At first Cornbury tried to divide his patronage evenly, but eventually he adjusted to local expectations and embraced most (but not all) of the Anti-Leislerians.

And there were also the restive colonists of New Jersey for Cornbury to deal with: they wanted their own governor rather than accept rule by the governor of New York. For all these reasons, then, any royal governor would have made his share of enemies—as did all of Cornbury's predecessors and successors. But Cornbury made more than his share of enemies, owing to his brusque manner, his conservative principles, and his aggressive self-interest.

A military man by training and long service, he expected to govern by command, and he did not suffer opposition gladly. A Tory by family politics, he favored a High Church and an authoritarian sovereign at home and in the colonies. (His Whig rivals were more

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libertarian in their politics and tended to be more latitudinarian in their religion and morals.) Deeply in debt, Cornbury tried to improve his income by claiming every possible perquisite of the governorship, at the expense of other royal officers and colonial officials with their own needs and greed.

His administration was rife with controversies, as Cornbury tangled with an array of equally contentious opponents: a Presbyterian minister (John Hubbard), an Anglican parson (Thoroughgood Moore), two royal naval captains (George Fane and Richard Davis), New Jersey's leading land speculator (Lewis Morris), an upper Hudson magnate (Robert Livingston), and a deputy auditor for the Royal Treasury (George Clarke). "Clearly Cornbury relished wielding power, was impatient of insolence, and was not loath to intervene in the chain of command," Bonomi observes. Still, he enjoyed substantial political support in both houses of the New York legislature and in the upper house of the New Jersey—evidence that he was not hopelessly maladroit at politics.

Unfortunately for Cornbury, his enemies were especially talented, ruthless, and resourceful. In letters to their political friends in England, they charged the governor with browbeating his opponents, with taking a bribe, and with embezzling defense funds to build a summer pleasure house by the sea. More insidiously, a few suggested that Lord Cornbury frequently appeared in public in women's attire, thereby discrediting his office and dishonoring his monarch. Robert Livingston claimed that hundreds of spectators daily witnessed their governor promenading "in womens Cloths." Lewis Morris insisted that "the Scandal of his life is ... he rarely fails of being dresst in Women's Cloaths every day, and almost half his time is spent that way, and [he] seldome misses it on a Sacrament day ... and this not privately but in face of the Sun and sight of the Town." And the most specific accusation came from the Anglican catechist Elias Neau:

> My Lord Cornbury has and dos still make use of an unfortunate Custom of dressing himself in Womens Cloaths and of exposing himself in that Garb upon the Ramparts to the view of the public; in that dress he draws a World of Spectators about him and consequently as many Censures, especially for exposing himself in such a manner [on] all the great Holy days and even in an hour or two after going to the Communion.

Bonomi persuasively places the charges against Cornbury in the context of his partisan times, when Whigs and Tories struggled for control of the home government (and its patronage plums, including colonial posts). These struggles were especially heated because neither party regarded the other as a legitimate opposition. Since each party thought of itself as exclusively zealous for monarch and country, each regarded the other as comprised of crypto-traitors ready to betray the realm to its enemies.

Believing the worst of each other, the two parties vied to gather and to disseminate vicious attacks on the loyalty and the morality of their foes. The lifting of official press censorship in 1695 freed the notorious Grub Street press in London to generate reams of scandalmongering print, charging great men and women with corruption, adultery, homosexuality, and treason. Not even the sovereign was immune. Mocking King William's failure to sire an heir, a Tory writer charged the monarch with a preference for sodomy:

> Lets pray for the good of our State and
> his Soul
> That He'd put his Roger into the
> Right Hold.

And Cornbury's colonial foes played aggressively by the new political rules of vilification. Recognizing that only the Lords of Trade could remove a royal governor, Cornbury's colonial foes worked relentlessly to discredit him by collecting and sending home every shred of compromising evidence and every piece of malicious gossip. Eventually the strategy worked: emboldened by the accusations from the colonies, the Whig majority on the Board of Trade recalled the Tory Governor Cornbury in 1708. The Board appointed a Whig to replace him.

Bonomi demonstrates that the evidence gathered against Cornbury by his enemies was not only biased but also insubstantial. The one witness to his alleged receipt of a bribe was a bitter enemy of dubious veracity. The defense funds allegedly embezzled had probably never been collected by the inefficient provincial treasury. The evidence for Cornbury's transvestism is especially weak. It consists of four surviving letters written by three bitter enemies: Robert Livingston, Lewis Morris, and Elias Neau. They neither claimed to have seen the episodes of cross-dressing nor did they identify witnesses who had. Instead they conveyed hearsay.

Bonomi establishes that respectable Englishmen of Cornbury's generation were becoming aggressively intolerant of any public display of homosexuality or transvestism. Had Cornbury appeared often in public in a dress, there would

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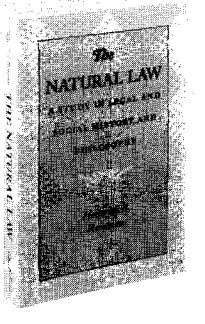
THE NATURAL LAW
A Study in Legal and Social History and Philosophy
By Heinrich A. Rommen
Introduction by Russell Hittinger



Originally published in German in 1936, *The Natural Law* is the first work to clarify the differences between traditional natural law as represented in the writings of Cicero, Aquinas, and Hooker and the revolutionary doctrines of natural rights espoused by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. Beginning with the legacies of Greek and Roman life and thought, Rommen traces the natural law tradition to its displacement by legal positivism and concludes with what the author calls "the reappearance" of natural law thought in more recent times. In seven chapters each Rommen explores "The History of the Idea of Natural Law" and "The Philosophy and Content of the Natural Law." In his introduction, Russell Hittinger places Rommen's work in the context of contemporary debate on the relevance of natural law to philosophical inquiry and constitutional interpretation.

Heinrich Rommen (1897–1967) taught in Germany and England before concluding his distinguished scholarly career at Georgetown University.

Russell Hittinger is professor of philosophy and law at the University of Tulsa.

229 + xxii pages. Introduction, translator's preface, select bibliography, index.

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have been no containing the uproar. Thus, "the most intriguing thing is, not the existence of letters from three of Governor Cornbury's most vocal enemies charging him with public cross dressing, but rather the absence of the much larger volume of noise such behavior would have aroused had it actually been observed." Moreover, although Cornbury spent sixty-two of his seventy-one years in England or on the Continent, they provide not a shred of surviving evidence that he was a transvestite. All of the accusations of cross-dressing derive from his nine years in the colonies, from his political adversaries there.

But what about the scandalous portrait hanging in the New-York Historical Society? On stylistic and technical grounds, the painting dates to Cornbury's generation, but it lacks the right provenance. Instead of descending within the Hyde family of Oxfordshire, the portrait belonged to the Pakingtons of Worcestershire: a family that lacked any marital or blood connection to the Hydes. The earliest known claim that the portrait depicts Cornbury dates to 1796, seventy-three years after his death.

Moreover, the painted face does not resemble the two surviving portraits that more certainly represent Cornbury. (In both of them he appears in male attire.) Bonomi plausibly argues that the controversial portrait originally depicted a woman, now unknown, who lived in Cornbury's time. Only much later, for unknowable reasons, did the portrait become confused with the myth of the cross-dressing Lord. (Even if the painting did represent Cornbury, we could not then take it for evidence of his cross-dressing, because the portrait might have been made by his enemies as part of their campaign of detraction.) Bonomi concludes that the portrait as "evidence for the charge that Cornbury was a transvestite must be declared factitious." She is probably right. Still, a nagging question remains: Why would the Pakingtons of the 1790s insist that their painting represented a long-dead and obscure colonial governor? If Bonomi is right that no one in England in the early eighteenth century heeded the colonial charges of transvestism, why did that story show such staying power and become attached to this picture?

Bonomi demonstrates that the case against the governor as cross-dresser remains unproved. Of course, she cannot prove the negative: that the governor never appeared in public in women's attire. Indeed, there is something about the very implausibility of the accusation that denies Bonomi's preference to declare the case closed. She shows that irresponsible slander was ubiquitous in Anglo-American politics of the early eighteenth century, but the staples of scurrility were charges of corruption, treason, sexual promiscuity, adultery, and homosexuality—everything, it seems, except transvestism. Her examples of cross-dressing allegations are few, and they date to the late eighteenth century (when, for example, one English writer insisted that George Washington delighted in women's wear).

If Cornbury's colonial enemies fabricated their slander, surely they would have reached for something more commonplace and believable. To build their power in the colonies, Lewis Morris and Robert Livingston needed to sustain an influence in London that hinged upon their reputations as gentlemen of honor and reliability. They probably believed that, if it was demanded of them, they could have satisfied their English contacts with some substantiation of their charges.

There must, then, have been some small germ of truth to their extravagant accusation. At the very least, the foes drew upon Cornbury's arrogant insistence that in the colonies his power was monarchical, that he was the provincial embodiment of his sovereign: Queen Anne, his cousin, a woman. To intimidate opponents, Cornbury clothed himself figuratively in the Queen's authority. Did he ever literally clothe himself as the Queen, to make his point visually? We cannot know, but the evidence does not rule it out. Such a miscalculation would help make sense of the private obituary penned by his aunt into the flyleaf of her Bible: "By the blessed passion sweet Jesu I beseech thee to look on the sincerity of his heart and his great charity. Lay not his follies to his charge, but have mercy on his poor soul." What "follies" did she mean?

By discrediting the evidence against the governor, Bonomi calls into question the judgment of previous historians who readily accepted the myth of the villainous Lord Cornbury. She blames the Whig (or "Country") tradition that predominates in both American and English history-writing. This tradition tells a liberal story of progress from the bad old days of aristocratic privilege and monarchical power onward and upward toward enlightenment, egalitarianism, and democracy. The story is progressive, and so it is also a morality play that divides historical figures into visionary heroes who advance the democratic future and reactionary villains who retard it.

The Whigs of the early eighteenth century tended to speak more libertarian lines in the political play, and so they have been more readily cast as proto-patriots. Conversely, anyone who pressed the imperial agenda reeks of moral and political turpitude. Although both Cornbury's predecessor as New York's royal governor, the Earl of Bellomont, and his successor, Robert Hunter, experienced their share of political controversy and financial crisis, they were both Whigs—and they have enjoyed far more generous treatment from historians. The Tory Cornbury has been left to play the rogue, credited with every sin imagined by his Whig enemies.

Where Whiggish historians celebrate those colonial figures who defended provincial autonomy from imperial initiative, Bonomi vindicates those such as Cornbury, who effectively promoted imperial power over the colonies. She casts his Whig enemies as small-minded, mendacious, and reckless hypocrites. In this way, Bonomi contributes to a new historiographical trend known as "the new imperial history." It is an attempt to break with the Whig tradition by taking more seriously, and treating more sympathetically, the men who built and administered the British empire in America.

As a royal governor in colonial America, Cornbury was, in Bonomi's account, one of the best of a good breed, and not the worst of a bad lot, as Whig history had it: "Considerable evidence suggests that the royal governors often responsibly administered their colonies to serve what they reasonably believed was the greater good of the empire." Although Bonomi does not press the case so far, other "new imperial" historians have suggested that "the greater good of the empire" was better for the colonists than they recognized. British imperialism was more inclusive, cosmopolitan, and tolerant of ethnic, racial, and religious diversity than the provincialism of the colonists or their subsequent revolutionary nationalism and majoritarianism that suppressed or exploited minorities.

The new imperial history is not unconnected to shifts in contemporary political and literary discourse that wax nostalgic for the ramshackle but inclusive compromises of past empires as better than the atrocities of revolutionary nationalism. (The Balkans were better when the Hapsburgs united and ruled them, and so on.) Lord Cornbury has found a new and effective champion in Patricia Bonomi in part because empire currently enjoys a new respectability in intellectual journals and historical scholarship.

Bonomi demonstrates that there was no legal case against Cornbury for

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malfeasance in office or for public cross-dressing (which was a crime prosecuted in England and the colonies). But Bonomi seeks more than an acquittal. She presses for Cornbury's complete vindication as an especially conscientious and effective colonial governor. Eclectic in her defenses of Cornbury's suspect actions, Bonomi sometimes paints a contradictory picture. She presents him as the victim of unscrupulous political enemies who hounded him from America and blackened his name, yet she also writes that "one of Cornbury's achievements, often overlooked, is that he actually managed to lower the temperature in politically feverish New York." She initially represents Cornbury as a diligent champion of imperial efficiency and responsibility, a cosmopolitan who got into trouble with the provincials because he promoted a more rationalized and regularized empire, yet she later depicts Cornbury as the victim of that bureaucratic drive for more system and more centralized power. (To vindicate Cornbury, she insists that Treasury audits had faulted Cornbury's fiscal management only because the Lord Treasurer had imposed new, higher standards on colonial record-keeping.)

Bonomi does not address one of the most sordid aspects of Cornbury's administration: his notoriety for exploiting his land-granting powers to enrich himself and his political cronies with massive tracts of frontier land—at the expense of the Indians and the common settlers, and in violation of his royal instructions that forbade the practice. Cornbury, for example, granted an 800,000-acre tract of land known as Kayaderosseras. Located between the Hudson and the Mohawk Rivers, the Kayaderosseras tract was based on a patently fraudulent Indian deed that infuriated the Mohawk Indians, who, as British allies, were critical to the colony's frontier defense against French attack. He reaped lucrative fees for this land grant—that is, he pursued his own interest rather than the common interest of his colony and his empire.

The safest verdict is that Cornbury was neither especially competent and honest nor the blackguard of his enemies' imaginations. A complex man of considerable talents and many lapses in judgment, he ultimately failed in his balancing acts: to make his fortune and to remain on good terms with other colonial officers; to obey his demanding royal instructions and to cultivate popularity with a fractious and divided colonial elite. But almost all of the royal governors of his time failed similarly within a few years of their arrival. In the

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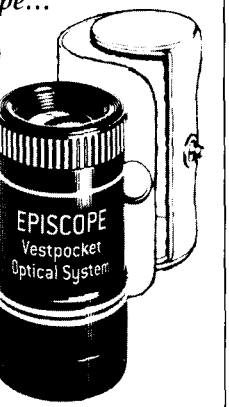

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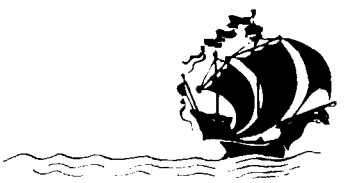

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early eighteenth century, the imperial authorities preferred to sack the compromised and discredited governor, sending out a newcomer to start the cycle anew. Later in the century, when the empire did at last insist upon supporting its beleaguered governors, it alienated most of the colonial elite and provoked our revolution.

In her defense of Lord Cornbury, Bonomi casts the political culture of his lifetime as distinctively irresponsible, salacious, and paranoid—an alien world from our own presumably more sedate and bipartisan politics. "The modern reader—though no stranger to rough political practices—is scarcely equipped to grasp the intense ardor, the unbounded ferocity of politics in the time of Cornbury." Her research revealed "a world steamy with intrigue, gossip, and rumormongering—all part of an early modern political style.... In short, a climate of conspiracy, slander, and general foul play pervaded the public life of the Anglo-American world." She concludes that "it was the bad historical destiny of Lord Cornbury to have been a prime victim of the Country impulse in its earliest, crudest, most ruthless stage."

Bonomi implies that Cornbury's reputation would have been safer in the politics of a later day. Yet the delay of a year in the production of a book manuscript can play cruel tricks on an author. In the interim between the completion of her manuscript and the publication of her book, she must watch helplessly as events reshape her readers' expectations. Now the saga of Cornbury's sexual and political vilification must be read in the thick of Monica Lewinsky and Linda Tripp. Americans sated with the partisan warfare over Bill Clinton's sex life and the outrageous allegations about Vince Foster's fate will not so readily concede to the early modern era a preeminence in conspiracy theories and the political uses of innuendo. Bonomi notes that the Grub Street press of the early eighteenth century perfected a "scurrilous, defamatory style that reveled in gossip and did not flinch at slandering reputations." Who could now conclude that such a style is alien to modern readers?

ALAN TAYLOR is the author of *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (Knopf).

The Year of Writing Dangerously

BY JOHN BREWER

England in 1819: The Politics of Literary Culture and the Case of Romantic Historicism by James Chandler

(University of Chicago Press, 584 pp., $35)

A date is a date, but some dates, as we know from our private lives, are more memorable than others. There are hot dates and cold dates, dates that give pleasure and dates that give pain, dates that won't go away even if we want them to. And as in love and lust, so in history. Some dates seem mute or virtually inaudible, lost in the white noise of chronology, while others have tremendous resonance and speak volumes. It is almost impossible to utter the dates 1492, 1776, 1789, 1848, 1914, and 1989 and not think immediately of conquest, slavery, death, liberty, and revolution. They are, in Lévi-Strauss's term, "hot chronologies."

1819? At first sight, it might not seem a "hot date"; but, as James Chandler argues in his powerful book, it would be a mistake to overlook a year of such exceptional political conflagration and literary pyrotechnics in British history. Chandler's study is a wide-ranging, enormously ambitious, densely packed, closely argued work, more like two or three books than one. It is, first, an extended reflection on the temporalities, the periodizations, the terms and the techniques used by historians and literary scholars of the early nineteenth century. "I found myself," he writes, "asking questions ... about what we do when we 'date' a literary work. What exactly do we think we learn in establishing its time and place?"

The book is also a critical appraisal of the works of Walter Scott, Byron, Keats, Washington Irving, and above all Shelley, all of whom wrote some of their finest work in 1819. And it also claims, rather boldly, that the roots of the recent rediscovery of history in literary studies (notably in the "new historicism") can be traced back to the Romantic writings that he discusses:

> We should study these writings, and study them in relation to the conditions in which they were produced, precisely to discover the historical formation, the "datedness," of some of our now-familiar categories of analysis.... Representative anecdote, literary specimen, "text of culture," and "historical case": all these notions, crucial to contemporary criticism, undergo a decisive transformation, well registered in certain works in 1819, in the period of Britain's self-conscious literary struggles over how to represent itself.

To make this grand connection, Chandler has to investigate the techniques of recent literary criticism and simultaneously use nineteenth-century poems, plays, and novels to identify the Romantic contribution to our understanding of the relations between history and literature. There is thus a constant dialogue between the present and the past. As a result, Chandler's story contains a huge cast of characters, not only the romantic authors of 1819 but the usual suspects in literary theory, such as Fredric Jameson and Jacques Derrida; such big hitters in Romantic studies as Jerome McGann and Marilyn Butler; major critics such as Kenneth Burke, Georg Lukács, and Stephen Greenblatt; and a host of other scholars. On Chandler's pages Roland Barthes jostles Edmund Burke, Carlo Ginsburg does a double act with Thomas Babington Macaulay, Hazlitt gets compared to Habermas, and James Dean is described as "the American Shelley" of the 1950s.

Chandler's starting point is the political conflict of 1819. A familiar story to political historians, it begins in the aftermath of the battle of Waterloo, with Britain's elite bitterly divided and the economy slumped in a deep postwar depression which especially affected the great manufacturing towns. It is a tale of public agitation for political reform, of vituperative press debate and mass street demonstrations, and of an increasingly bitter struggle between prime minister Lord Liverpool's unrepentant Toryism and his reformist opponents.

This conflict came to a head on August 16, 1819, at St. Peter's Fields, Manchester, where 60,000 people assembled to hear "Orator" Henry Hunt speak in favor of "Annual Parliaments and Universal Suffrage." The crowd was attacked by the mounted and armed Manchester

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Yeomanry, who had been ordered by magistrates to arrest Hunt. As Chandler reminds us, "The facts and figures of Peterloo continue to be debated to this day, but civilian casualties probably ran to over three hundred, with perhaps a dozen fatalities among them."

In the wake of the "Peterloo Massacre," the government backed the magistrates, increased the size of the army, arrested many reformist leaders, and passed the Six Acts, which restricted the right of public assembly and freedom of the press. Peterloo was what we would call a defining moment (in its time it was called "an unexampled event") for radicals and conservatives alike. It was the hour when the dreams of reformers were smashed by a repressive regime, or it was the hour when the nation was saved by the firm use of authority against a treasonous mob. For both sides, then, 1819 was a climacteric.

As Chandler shows, however, 1819 was also something else. It was a literary annus mirabilis. In Hampstead in the fall of 1818, John Keats, enamored of Fanny Brawne, beset with financial problems, and already showing signs of the tuberculosis that killed him three years later, began his greatest work—the two "Hyperions," "The Eve of St Agnes," "The Eve of St. Mark," all the great odes, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," "Lamia," and the late sonnets—and this great outpouring was stopped only when he became crippled by illness. In 1819 Percy Bysshe Shelley, in self-imposed Italian exile, wrote two dramatic masterpieces, "Prometheus Unbound" and "The Cenci," as well as the "Ode to the West Wind," "The Mask of Anarchy," the beginnings of *A Philosophical View of Reform*, and a number of radical poems, including the sonnet, "England in 1819," from which Chandler takes his title. This was also the year in which Byron wrote the first two cantos of *Don Juan*, issued anonymously and without identifying its publisher John Murray, and when the ever-prolific Walter Scott published three novels, *The Bride of Lammermoor, A Legend of Montrose*, and *Ivanhoe*. Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Hazlitt were rival lecturers at the Crown and Anchor Tavern on the Strand, Coleridge declaiming what were to become his *Philosophical Lectures*, while Hazlitt, who also published his *Political Essays*, delivered his *Lectures on the English Comic Writers*.

Thus Shelley's hyperbolic claim in *A Philosophical View of Reform* that "we live among such philosophers and poets as surpass beyond comparison any who have appeared in our nation since its last struggle for liberty" was not so hyperbolic after all. No wonder that Chandler writes, a little parochially, that "my students and I were surprised to learn that the wealth of literary production for 1819 far exceeded the capacity of a graduate course to accommodate it."

What links this tale of literary creativity to a saga of political strife? At the most obvious level, the chief literary figures that Chandler discusses—Shelley, Scott, Byron, and even Keats—all commented in their letters, their journals, and their literary work on the bitter conflicts between government and radicals. Sometimes the engagement was direct, as in Shelley's pro-radical sonnet "England in 1819":

> An old, mad, blind, despised and dying King;
> Princes, the dregs of the dull race, who flow
> Through public scorn,—mud from a muddy spring....

Sometimes the political commentary was oblique, as in the conservative Scott's treatment of inequality before the law in *The Bride of Lammermoor*.

This was a period, as Chandler and others have shown, when the literature of politics and the politics of literature were closely interwoven. In the age of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Examiner*, the *Quarterly Review*, and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* fought over politics and aesthetics, moral judgment and artistic taste. It was not a struggle for the squeamish. Whigs such as Byron and Hazlitt (both keen on pugilism) pulled no punches. Byron's Lord Castlereagh in *Don Juan* is, according to Chandler, "the two-faced embodiment of tyranny and sycophancy in the poem." He is depicted as a murderous hermaphrodite, "Cold-blooded, smooth-faced, placid miscreant! / Dabbling its sleek young hands in Erin's gore." And Hazlitt was no less restrained. He claimed of one Tory journal that "the dingy cover that wraps the pages of the *Quarterly Review* does not contain a concentrated essence of taste and knowledge, but is a receptacle for the scum and sediment of all the prejudice, bigotry, ill-will, ignorance, and rancour, afloat in the kingdom." And the Tories gave as good as they got: in *Blackwood's* John Gibson Lockhart dubbed Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, and Keats "the Cockney poets" for their vulgarity of style, and condemned them as "the vilest vermin" of "extreme moral depravity." *Don Juan* received similar treatment, execrated as "a filthy and impious poem."

Chandler depicts these acrimonious exchanges with some relish, but what he wants to stress is that this conflict contributed to a larger transformation in the Romantic writers' vision of history and their place within it. His starting point is Shelley's "England in 1819," which prompts him to reflect generally on historical periodization, on how our choice of a particular period of time—an epoch, an age, a decade, a year, or a day—affects our interpretation of events (including the writing of literature) within their duration.

According to Chandler, Shelley and the other Romantic writers whom he examines use "one of the most self-consciously novel and distinct coinages of that period": what Hazlitt called "the spirit of the age." In this view, history may be in a constant state of flux, but it has a discrete identity during an era or epoch. The products of the age—its personalities, its manners, its artifacts, its arts—all bear its distinctive mark. It therefore becomes possible, as Chandler puts it, to read culture in a text and to read culture as a text. This way of viewing history not only shaped what Lukács identified as Scott's invention of the modern historical novel with its "derivation of the individuality of characters from the historical peculiarity of their age," but also the Romantic penchant for treating a particular date or event ("1819") as a means of raising larger issues or principles.

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This technique, Chandler argues, is the chief link between Romantic historicism and contemporary new historicist criticism. Both use the particulars of history—incidents, anecdotes, detailed examples—to explore the peculiarities of an age; and both assume a certain (if rather indeterminate) representativeness for their cases, even when they seem exotic, singular, or abnormal. Such case studies analyze individual judgments as well as larger values, and take account of circumstantial evidence and the uniqueness of the event to try to understand and to resolve the conflicts and the contradictions that these cases inevitably entail. "The case," as Chandler puts it, "has a distinctively dramatic or performative character in that it involves the issuing of judgments or passing of sentences, both on scenes of action and in scenes of conflict. . . . The case form . . . is associated at once with agency, judgment, and normativity, on the one hand, and with the working through of contradiction on the other."

Such case studies involve a sort of casuistry which, Chandler emphasizes, is "a form of practice, an activity, a strategy of application." (These votaries of concreteness do not always speak concretely.) For it is central both to the new historicism and to Chandler's version of the writers of 1819 that the cases they discuss, though they are marked by the spirit of the age, are not a mere reflection of it, but also a reflection on it. Through their imagination and their interpretation, they help to create the age and to confer upon it its historical dynamic. Poets, as Shelley famously put it, are "the unacknowledged legislators" of the world.

So what sort of case study is *England in 1819*, and how does it register and transform the spirit of the current age? Chandler's study is a fine example of current literary-critical academic writing. It reflects both its strengths and its weaknesses. It is a study of exceptional openness, not least in Chandler's repeated reflections on his own enterprise, his determination to question his assumptions and his methods. Such "reflexivity" is now virtually *de rigueur* in literary studies, though it has yet to affect the majority of historians, most of whom still belong to the Nike school—"Just do it!"—more often than not regarding what they do as self-evident.

This difference between the two disciplines (I exaggerate it, but not very much) stems from the relative insecurity and uncertainty of the status of literary criticism since the assault upon its old "humanist" assumptions—a circumstance that has paradoxically encouraged its current ambitiousness. (It is also a consequence of the imaginative poverty of much historians' writing; but that is another story.) As a result, studies such as Chandler's are not so much open to notions from other disciplines as actively solicitous of them.

I cannot imagine a history book written about early nineteenth-century Britain that would discuss the debate about historical method between Sartre and Lévi-Strauss, engage with Bergson and Hegel, and offer an extended historical account of casuistry. Only a literary scholar could have written *England in 1819*. It is exemplary of a discipline that is committed to cross-disciplinary fertilization. To be sure, this eclecticism sometimes has the unlikely consequence of seeming too "inside": Chandler's discussion with other scholars sometimes reads like the table-talk of contributors to *Critical Inquiry*. But the larger point is that *England in 1819* well represents the restless, open-minded, critical, questioning spirit that universities ought to nurture, but which, in this age of vulgar social utility, they often find hard to sustain.

Nor is Chandler's study marred by the entrenched and intractable position-taking that can make modern scholarship such a battlefield, the site merely of "culture wars." Its tone is always courteous even when, as in his interpretation of Keats, it signals radical disagreement with other critics. This may not be the spirit of our age, but we should applaud it.

One of the most attractive features of *England in 1819* is that it constantly invites you to discuss and debate the major issues that it broaches. But Chandler also makes some territorial claims, not least in relocating the heart of new historicist studies not in accounts of the Renaissance, where it is generally thought to have begun, but in the nineteenth century. He also wants to argue that current "new historicist" approaches draw their inspiration and techniques neither from nineteenth-century German historicism nor from French fiction (notably the

Elegy after a Photograph of Henry and William James at the Houghton Library

I don't have a brother
anymore, but if I did I would
want him to be just like you, Henry James,
standing beside your brother on the grass
before the camera on a not-too-sunny day
beneath blurry trees and blank sky.

I would want him to hold his white hat
with the wide black band
in his right hand, modestly.
I would want him to clasp one hand over the other.
I would want him to wear his trousers loose
with an elegant break at the top of his shoes.

I would want him to stand close,
his head tilted as yours tilts toward William,
a half-ashamed gesture of affection
like a man offering left-over cake,
the sweetness of someone long full of love
with no one to give it to.

Even if his mind were intact
and his words made more-than-perfect sense,
my arm would wrap around his shoulder
as William's wraps around yours
to comfort him, not quite touching
his familiar body.

Susan Lasher

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novels of Balzac), but from a singularly British version of Romantic historicism.

Chandler treats the new historicism critically and historically, but he uses its techniques and he shares many of its assumptions. His approach is historicist as much as historical, examining documents (writings that inform us about events in the past) but giving priority to texts (writings that make rather than mark history). And his approach, like the approach of other historicists, raises some very awkward questions, not just about what it means to select a particular date or epoch, but about why we choose to study certain texts and not others.

Much of the new historicist analysis affirms the possibility that every product, whether a literary or a material artifact, bears the marks of its epoch, and can therefore be used to represent it. Yet this same analysis typically chooses a limited number of literary works to speak for the age. All sorts of other materials—laws and institutions, different sorts of writing—may be mobilized, but chiefly to be brought to bear on major literary works. Thus the approach is often less open-minded and less new than might at first appear.

Why has Chandler chosen the writings of Shelley, Scott, Keats, Irving, and Byron as his primary cases? It is a common criticism of the new historicism that its close reading of literary works to establish unexpected connections between literature, other genres of writing, and social and political values and institutions often elides or overlooks the questions of how and why such texts are representative of the age. In its simplest and least satisfactory version, historicism makes the question redundant, because in its view all works reflect the spirit of the age; and so its analysis is rigged, in that it assumes what it must prove. Chandler is well aware of the explanatory weakness of such a method, and his claim is a rather different one. He has chosen works that best express the historicist vision that is both his own method and the object of his study.

Yet he has not quite escaped the objection. Though many works are used to elaborate Chandler's argument, what is really striking is how many of its chief materials are drawn from an utterly conventional literary canon. The reputations of Byron, Keats, Shelley, and Scott have had their ups and downs, but they are the perennial objects of literary critical study. And these writers have earned their scholarly centrality as much for the place they have occupied in the study of English literature as for their representativeness of the age in which they wrote. Rediscovering history might seem to free critics from a more traditional approach to literature; but much new historicist writing shows that it often still lingers over the familiar works, over the classics.

Chandler's *England in 1819*, like Shelley's "England in 1819," is a highly literary version of that year. Though it signals an aesthetic and moral engagement, it is also the product of a great distance from the events that it helps to shape. (Shelley was in Florence, Byron in the Palazzo Mocenigo in Venice enjoying a life of "promiscuous concubinage," Irving in the United States, and Scott in Scotland.) It is possible, of course, to imagine a rather different construction of *England in 1819*, a version that chose a different group of cases and writings. It would have been interesting to see the results of an analysis that used Chandler's historicist techniques to analyze the cases (usually treason trials) and texts produced by the radicals, reformers, and journalists who spent most of their time making the "documentary" history, the political events of 1819.

The material is certainly ample: the trial of Thomas Wooler, editor of the radical *Black Dwarf*, for seditious conspiracy; the imprisonment of Richard Carlile for blasphemy in the *Deist*; the prosecution of Samuel Bamford for conspiracy to incite riot at St. Peter's Fields; and the jailing for two and a half years of Henry "Orator" Hunt, the main speaker at Peterloo. All these radicals and reformers wrote eloquently on the state of the nation, and fulminated about the spirit of the age. Some of them, such as Bamford, who published *The Weaver Boy, or Miscellaneous Poetry* (1819), were even poets.

New historicists often make a distinction—Chandler says that it first emerged in the early nineteenth century—between the documentary function and the creative function of texts, between the recording of events and the making of history. Sometimes this is characterized as the difference between treating something as a document or as a text. This is a useful enough distinction. I could use the Manhattan phone book and an IRS form as sources for the ethnic and social composition of the borough, and for an account of the fiscal obligations of the public; but I could also ask what forms of culture, what ideals of individual and social life, are represented in the white and yellow pages, or in the elaborate system of rules and exemptions produced by the legislature.

Even the most documentary of documents can be analyzed from the standpoint of the spirit of the age, just as works of the imagination have a documentary dimension. On the whole, historians prefer to treat their materials as documents, and literary critics prefer to treat them as texts. But Chandler has skillfully shown that there is profit in examining the sources in both ways. Perhaps then we would achieve the greater rapprochement between literature and history that he so ardently desires.

JOHN BREWER is Professor of Cultural History at The European University Institute in Florence and the author of *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux).

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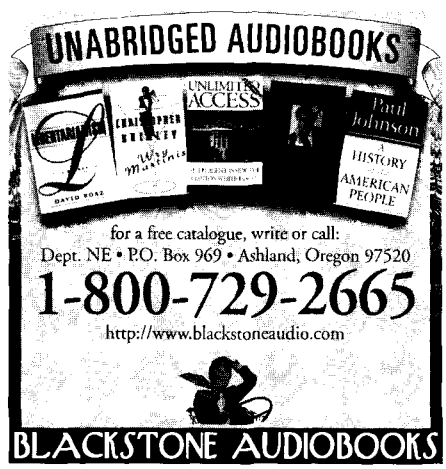

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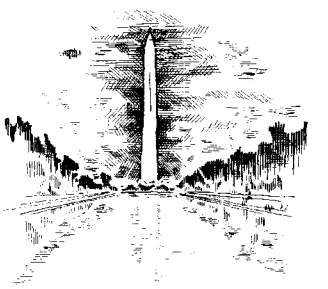
WASHINGTON DIARIST

The case against myself

IN JUNE I WAS QUOTED ON THE front page of *The Wall Street Journal* in an article on temporary labor in Europe. The passage read: "'Whether unions and leftists like it or not,' the European market 'has imposed its own balance,' says Jonathan Chait, chairman of Manpower Europe, the fast-growing temporary-job unit of Manpower Inc. of the U.S." OK, so it wasn't me. Nonetheless, seeing a namesake in the newspaper made me feel oddly proprietary, as if the other Jonathan Chaits of the world provided a glimpse of how my life would have turned out if I had been born into different circumstances. And so it came as a comfort to read that Chait has attained such a high corporate rank and that his company is "fast-growing." It would be alarming, after all, if the *Journal* had reported, "The growth of temporary labor in Europe has displaced many previously employed workers such as Jonathan Chait, who sat outside the employment office soliciting coins from passersby, his breath reeking of cheap wine." Yet, at the same time, Chait seems to have taken success ungraciously. The first part of his sentence, in which he rubs his victory in the faces of his vanquished lefty foes, betrays an overbearing hubris. In his moment of glory, all he can think to do is to take a gratuitous swipe that he could have grafted onto any factual statement. ("Whether unions and leftists like it or not, asparagus is the hot summer vegetable for '98.") What a contrast with Jonathan Chait, the CEO of Reality Bytes in Cambridge. "I still take out the garbage. I still pass out the mail," Chait told *USA Today* two years ago. Despite his accomplishments, this Chait realizes that, but for the grace of God, he could have been a lowly scribbler eking out a stock optionless subsistence.

WILLIAM ROTH IS A GRANDFATHERLY senator from Delaware who has gone largely unnoticed by the national media. True, this magazine recently unleashed upon him an editorial blitzkrieg in the form of a TRB column, an editorial, and two Notebook items flaying Roth for his propensity to lard the tax code with breaks for the upper middle class. But, for the most part, Roth has escaped scrutiny—a fact I attribute entirely to his hailing from Delaware. If he came from Texas, he would be thought of as a monster. But Delaware is an uncontroversial state that most Americans regard—to the extent that they regard it at all—with fondness. So Roth gets away with it, and Delaware is sort of William Roth writ large (or, perhaps, writ small). But Delaware's cuddly, harmless image belies a debased polity, a bastion of parasitism and reaction. Delaware itself is an idiosyncrasy of federalism; by all rights, it should be part of Maryland, not an independent entity with two votes in the Senate. Of course you could also challenge the existence of, say, Rhode Island. What makes Delaware uniquely noxious is that its political franchise is based entirely on exploiting federalism. Take, for instance, Delaware's incorporation racket. Delaware's incorporation rules give stockholders very little protection against management and impose toothless residency requirements on businesses. So Delaware fattens its state treasury with the nominal filing fees of thousands of corporations from across the country. And there's more. Interstate 95, the main artery of the eastern seaboard, runs through Delaware, and so Delaware charges a toll on all drivers who pass through, which it can do because it is, technically, a state. The revenue this toll generates pales in comparison to the traffic delays it imposes. It once took me two hours to drive across a 300-yard stretch of pavement leading up to a Delaware toll both. If Delaware insists upon sucking money out of the rest of the country, it would be far more efficient to simply levy a tax on anyone who resides elsewhere. I would much rather mail a check to Delaware once a year than spend hours in an exhaust-choked traffic jam in order to pay for the privilege of driving through their "state."



I RECEIVED A PHONE MESSAGE the other day from someone who wanted my help in getting an article he'd written published in TNR. We had not spoken since we worked together on the college newspaper and had taken opposite sides in a political dispute. The dispute centered on whether I was a racist, sexist, right-wing bigot unfit for journalism; his side claimed I was, while I maintained, unpersuasively, that I was not. Suffice it to say I had not spent the intervening years trying to think up ways I could help this fellow, and his phone message reflected some acknowledgment of this. "We haven't spoken in a while," he observed, his flinty voice sounding uncharacteristically timid. "I know you're not my biggest fan." With that bit of unpleasantness out of the way, he immediately launched into his article pitch. It seems he has picked up one of the mores of Washington: The distinction between your friends and your enemies is less important than the distinction between people you know and people you don't. By this reasoning, the two of us have a connection. That the connection consists of his having viciously denounced me years ago no doubt struck him as beside the point. Several years ago a friend of his explained that he excoriated me not out of personal animosity but to advance his career at the paper. And so, predictably, his career has advanced rapidly enough—Harvard grad school, Capitol Hill—according to the brief resume summary he left on my voice mail. James Wood used this space a few weeks ago to ponder why bad things happen to good people. I have always been more interested in why good things happen to bad people. The answer, obviously, is that badness has its rewards, which is the main appeal of it.

AS THE DEADLINE FOR THIS ARTICLE approached, I happened to cast an absentminded glance at the newspaper business pages and noticed a familiar name. Jonathan Chait of Manpower Europe was back in the news, this time because he had resigned—just weeks after crowing to the *Journal* that "whether unions and leftists like it or not" the market "has imposed its own balance." Newspaper accounts seem to suggest that Chait was squeezed out: the *Journal* reports that he quit after the company announced a "reorganization" that scaled back his authority. Manpower's stock plunged after second-quarter earnings projections came in disappointingly low—at a time when Chait was bringing home a bonus of close to $900,000 on top of his $350,000 salary. It would seem that the capitalist discipline my namesake once so breezily touted can turn on richly compensated managers as well as leftists and unions. Whether Chait and other former executives like it or not, the market has imposed its own balance.

JONATHAN CHAIT

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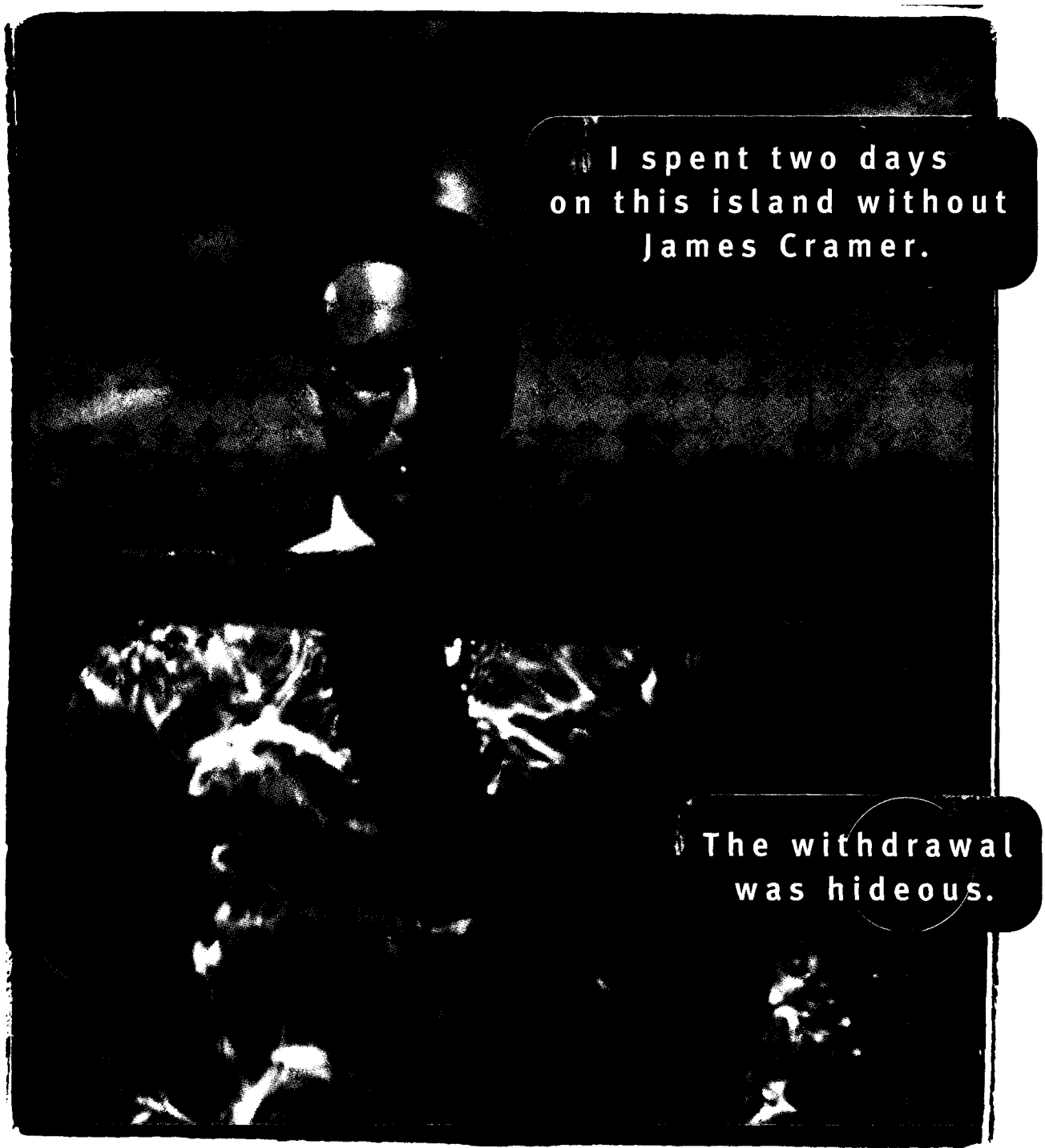

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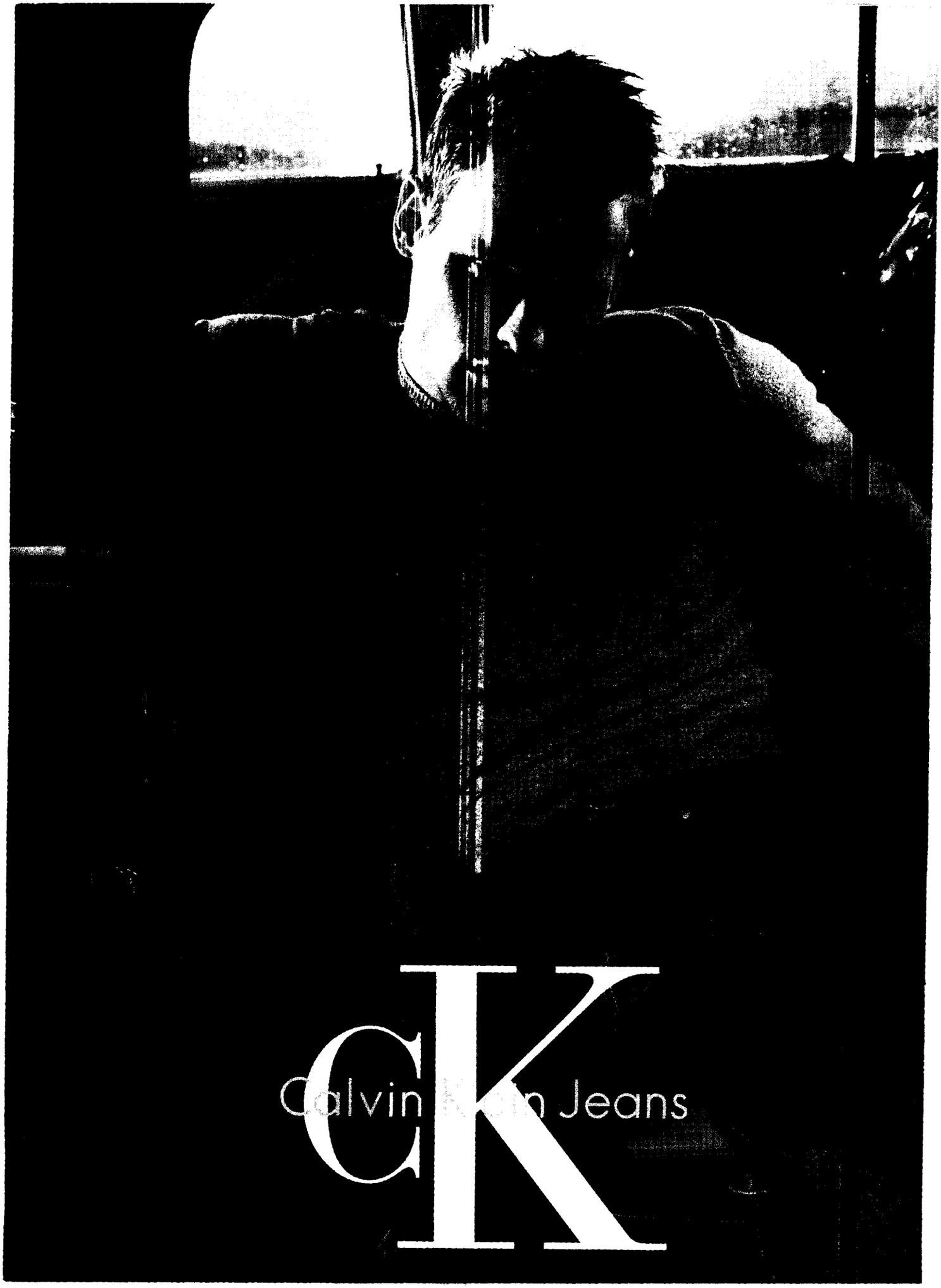

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